إمام اهل السنة
أحمد بن حنبل رحمه الله

The status of

Imaam Ahl us-Sunnah
Ahmed bin Hanbal

(rahimahullah)

According to the Muhadditheen

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The status of Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal according to the Muhadditheen

All praise is due to Allaah the Lord of the Universe; May Allaah's peace and blessings be upon His sincere Apostle: To Proceed

There has been a consensus among all the Muhadditheen and Scholars of this Ummah concerning the Famous Imaam of Ahl us-Sunnah, Abu Abdullah Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Hanbal bin Hilaal bin Asad ash-Shaybaani al-Marwazi al-Baghdaadi (rahimahullah) (D. 241H) that he was an Aadil, Dhaabit, Thiqah, and extremely reliable Imaam.

In this short and succinct article, we will mention the sayings of the Scholars of this Ummah with references and Tahqeeq, concerning Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal:

1- Imaam Abu Abdullaah Muhammad bin Ismaa'eel al-Bukhaari (rahimahullah) (D. 256 H), in his famous book **"Saheeh al-Bukhaari"** has taken narrations from Imaam Ahmed (rahimahullah) at the following places:

   [H. 377, 2108, 4473, 5105, 5879]

   This proves that Imaam Ahmed was Thiqah and Sudooq according to Imaam Bukhaari. This is also accorded by the fact that Imaam Bukhaari has taken evidence from the sayings of Imaam Ahmed in the field of Asmaa ur-Rijaal. For example, see: Kitaab ad-Du'afa of Bukhaari (80, 110, 240, 260, and 355); and Al-Taareekh al-Kabeer (7/291….)

2- Imaam Muslim bin al-Hajjaaj al-Nisaaboori rahimahullah (D. 261 H), in his famous book **"Saheeh Muslim"** has taken narrations from Imaam Ahmed at the following places:

[420/166, 519/215, 1117/502, 1313/581, 1644/710, 3095/1284, 3139/1298, 3962/1551, 4377/1676, 4574/1756, 4696/1814, 4996/1934, 5445/2081, 5479/2092, 5604/2139, 5210/2143, 6013/2309, 6256/2421, 6309/2449]

This proves that Imaam Ahmed was Thiqah and Sudooq according to Imaam Muslim.

3- Imaam Muhammad bin Ishaaq bin Khuzaymah al-Nisaaboori rahimahullah (D. 311H), in his **Saheeh Ibn Khuzaymah**, has brought narration from Imaam Ahmed [1/59 H. 112]

4- Imaam Muhammad bin Hibbaan al-Busti rahimahullah (D. 354 H), in his **Saheeh** (Al-Ihsaan) has narrated narrations from Imaam Ahmed at the following places:

[6, 1241/1244, 1503/1505, 1506/1508, 2738/2749, 3073/3084, 3570/3578, 3654/3662, 3656/3664, 3685/3693, 3778/3776, 3832/3846, 3872/3883, 3874/3885, 3938/3949, 4806/4826, 5224/5248, 5479/5503, 5491/5515, 5722/5752, 5789/5819, 5855/5885, 5864/5894, 6213/6246, 7026/7066]

Moreover, Haafidh Ibn Hibbaan said:

وَكَانَ حَافِظًا متقنا ورعا فَقِيها لَازِما للورع الْخَفي مواظبا على الْعِبَادَة الدائمة بِهِ أغاث الله جلّ وَعلا أمة مُحَمَّد صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَذَاكَ أَنه

ثَبت فِي المحنة وبذل نَفسه لله عز وَجل حَتَّى ضرب بالسياط للْقَتْل فعصمه الله عَن الْكفْر وَجعله علما يقْتَدى بِهِ وملجأ يلتجى إِلَيْهِ

"He (Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal) was Haafidh, excellent, Pious, Faqeeh. He strictly abode by observing secret religiousness and Daaimi worship. Allaah helped the Ummah of Muhammad (sallallaahu alayhi wasallam) through him. This is (true) by (the fact) that he remained firm in times of trial, and devoted himself to Allaah, and got ready to be martyred. He was beaten by stones. Allaah saved him from Kufr, and made him a person worth following. He was such a shelter that people used to find shelter under him." [Ath-Thiqaat of Ibn Hibbaan: Vol. 8 P. 18/ 19]

5- Imaam Ahmed bin Abdullah bin Saalih al-Ijlee rahimahullah (D. 261 H) said:

"(ثقة) ثبت في الحديث، نَزِه النفس، فقيه في الحديث، متبعٌ، يتبع الآثار، صاحب سنة خيّرٌ."

He (Imaam Ahmed) is (Thiqah) Thabat in Hadeeth; He is the possessor of a clean soul, and a Faqeeh in Hadeeth. He is an adherer, who adheres to the Athaar (Traditions). He was a man of Sunnah (Sunni) and pious.
[Ath-Thiqaat of Al-Ijlee: 9; Al-Taareekh al-Baghdaad: 4/415, Chain Saheeh; and the addition of Thiqah in brackets is from that]

6- Muhammad bin Sa'd bin Munee' al-Haashmi al-Basari al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 230 H) said:

وهو ثقة ثبت صدوق كثير الحديث.

“He is Thiqah (reliable) Thabat (very precise) Sudooq (Truthful) Katheer ul-Hadeeth (having abundant narrations)”
[Tabaqaat Ibn Sa’d: 7/354]

7- Imaam Abu Haatim Muhammad bin Idrees ar-Raazi rahimahullah (D. 277 H) said:

"هو امام، وهو حجة"

“He is an Imaam, and he is a Hujjah (evidence - in Deen)”
[Al-Jarh wat Ta’deel: 2/70]

Imaam Abu Haatim also said:

"كان احمد بن حنبل بارع الفهم لمعرفة الحديث بصحيحه وسقيمه"

“Ahmed bin Hanbal had a very good understanding of the Authentic and Weak narrations”
[Al-Jarh wat Ta’deel: 1/302, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Abu Haatim further said:

اذا رأيتم الرجل يحب احمد بن حنبل فاعلم انه صاحب سنة

“When you see a man loving Ahmed bin Hanbal, then know that this man is a man of Sunnah”
[Al-Jarh wat Ta’deel: 1/308, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Abu Haatim has declared Ahmed bin Hanbal to be a bigger Faqeeh than Ali ibn al-Madeeni
[Al-Jarh wat Ta’deel: 1/294, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Abu Haatim ar-Raazi once mentioned a very good dream concerning Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal

[Manaaqib Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 435, Chain Saheeh]

Note: Imaam Ahmed does not depend upon dreams, and Dreams (after the era of Sahaabah) are not even a Shara'ee Hujjah.

8- Imaam Abu Raja Qutaybah bin Sa'eed ath-Thaqafi rahimahullah (D. 240H) said:

"احمد بن حنبل امام الدنيا"

"Ahmed bin Hanbal is the Imaam of whole world."
[AL-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/295; 2/69, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Qutaybah bin Sa'eed said:

"Ahmed bin Hanbal and Ishaaq bin Rahwayh are Imaams of the whole world"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/417, Chain Saheeh]

Qutaybah also said:

لو أدرك أحمد بن حنبل عصر الثوري ومالك والأوزاعي والليث بن سعد لكان هو المقدم. قلت لقتيبة يضم أحمد بن حنبل إلى التابعين؟ قال: إلى كبار التابعين.

"If Ahmed bin Hanbal had witnessed the era of Ath-Thawree, Maalik, Al-Awzaa'ee, and Layth bin Sa'd then he would have been a superior (over them)."
(Abdullah bin Ahmed bin Shabwayh said) I asked Qutaybah: Is Ahmed bin Hanbal compared to the Taabi'een? He replied: "(Yes, he is compared) to the Major Taabi'een".
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/293; 2/69, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Qutaybah has preferred Imaam Ahmed over Imaam Yahya bin Yahya and Imaam Ishaaq bin Rahwayh.
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/293; 2/69, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Qutaybah bin Sa'eed said:

إذا رأيت الرجل يحب أحمد بن حنبل فأعلم أنه صاحب سنة وجماعة.

"When you see a man loving Ahmed bin Hanbal, then know that he is a man of Sunnah and Jamaa'ah"
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/308, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Qutaybah said:

لو لا احمد بن حنبل لمات الورع

"Had there been no Ahmed bin Hanbal, religious zeal would have died"
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/168, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Qutaybah further said:

"Had Ath-Thawree not been there, righteousness would have died; and had Ahmed not been there, people would have inserted Bid'aat (Innovations) in the religion"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/417, Chain Saheeh]

9- Abu Ja'far (Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ali bin Nufayl) al-Nufaylee rahimahullah (D. 234 H) said:

كان احمد بن حنبل من اعلام الدين

“Ahmed bin Hanbal was among the Leaders of Deen”
[Al-Jarh wat Ta’deel: 1/295; 2/69, Chain Saheeh]

10- Imaam Abdur Rahmaan bin Mahdi rahimahullah (D. 198 H) said:

هذا اعلم الناس بحديث الثوري

“This (Ahmed bin Hanbal) was the most knowledgeable person among the people concerning the hadeeth of (my teacher) Ath-Thawree”
[Al-Jarh wat Ta’deel: 1/292; 2/68, Chain Saheeh]

11- Imaam Abu Ubayd al-Qaasim bin Salaam rahimahullah (D. 224H) said:

" انتهى العلم إلى أربعة، إلى أحمد بن حنبل – وهو أفقههم فيه"

“Knowledge has ended over four (Ahmed, Ibn al-Madeeni, Ibn Ma’een, and Abu Bakr bin Abi Shaybah), over Ahmed bin Hanbal – who is the biggest jurist of them…”
[Al-Jarh wat Ta’deel: 1/293, Chain Saheeh]

12- Abu Thawr Ibraaheem bin Khaalid al-Faqeeh (D. 240H) said:

أحمد بن حنبل أعلم أو أفقه من الثوري.

“Ahmed bin Hanbal is a bigger Scholar or Faqeeh than (Sufyaan) Ath-Thawree”
[Al-Jarh wat Ta’deel: 1/293, Chain Saheeh]

13- Imaam Muhammad bin Muslim bin Waarah ar-Raazi rahimahullah (D. 270H) said concerning Imaam Ahmed:

كان صاحب فقه وصاحب حفظ وصاحب معرفة.

"He is a man of Fiqh, a man of (Strong) Memory, and a man of understanding"
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/294, Chain Saheeh]

14- Imaam Abu Zur'ah Ubaydullah bin Abdul Kareem ar-Raazi rahimahullah (D. 264 H) said:

ما أعلم في أصحابنا أسود الرأس أفقه من أحمد بن حنبل

"I do not know any one among our companions, whose hair color is black (i.e. he is young), to be more Faqeeh than Ahmed bin Hanbal"
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/294, Chain Saheeh]

He preferred Imaam Ahmed over Imaam Ishaaq bin Rahwayh and declared him a bigger Faqeeh than him. [Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 2/69, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Abu Zur'ah said:

لم أزل أسمع الناس يذكرون أحمد بن حنبل ويقدمونه على يحيى بن معين وعلى أبي خيثمة.

"I have always heard from the people that they mention Ahmed bin Hanbal and they prefer him over Yahya ibn Ma'een and Abu Khaythamah"
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 2/69, Chain Saheeh]

Moreover see, Manaaqib Ahmed (P. 337, Chain Saheeh), it also contains the additional words that: (After the trial), his mention surrounded all over the sky (i.e. all places).

Imaam Abu Zur'ah said:

ما رأيت أحدا أجمع من أحمد بن حنبل، وما رأيت أكمل منه، اجتمع فيه زهد وفضل وفقه وأشياء كثيرة.

"I have not seen anyone more Jaami (all-encompassing) than Ahmed bin Hanbal, and neither a more complete person than him, (the qualities like) asceticism, excellence, Fiqh, and a lot more things have gathered in him"
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/294, Chain Saheeh]

15- Imaam Ali ibn Abdullaah al-Madeeni rahimahullah (D. 234H) said:

ليس في أصحابنا احفظ من أبي عبد الله أحمد بن حنبل، وبلغني أنه لا يحدث إلا من كتاب، ولنا فيه أسوة حسنة.

"There is none, among our companions, a bigger a Haafidh than Abu Abdullah Ahmed bin Hanbal, and it has reached me that he does not narrate except through a Book, and in it is good example for us."
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/295; 2/69, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Ibn al-Madeeni said:

احمد بن حنبل سيدنا

"Ahmed bin Hanbal is our leader"
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/165, 171, Chain Saheeh; Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/417, Chain Saheeh; Manaaqib Ahmed P. 109, Chain Saheeh]

16- Amr bin Muhammad bin Bukayr al-Naaqid rahimahullah (D. 232H) said:

إذا وافقني أحمد بن حنبل على حديث فلا أبالي من خالفني.

If Ahmed bin Hanbal accords me in (the narration of) a hadeeth, then I do not care who opposes me.
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/296, Chain Hasan]

17- Abul Yamaan al-Hakam bin Naafi' al-Himsi rahimahullah (D. 222H) said:

كنت أشبه أحمد بن حنبل بارطاة ابن المنذر.

"I compare Ahmed bin Hanbal to Artaat bin al-Mundhir"
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/297, Chain Saheeh]

Artaat bin al-Mundhir was Thiqah [Taqreeb: 298]
He met Sayyidunah Thawbaan (radiallah anhu). [Tahdheeb al-Kamaal: 1/497]
Dhahabi said: "He is Thiqah" [Al-Kaashif: 1/55 T. 247]

18- Muhaddith Kabeer Imaam Ahmed bin Sinaan al-Waasiti rahimahullah (D. 259H) said:

ما رأيت يزيد ابن هارون لأحد أشد تعظيما منه لأحمد بن حنبل، وكان يقعده إلى جنبه إذا حدثنا ومرض أحمد بن حنبل فركب إليه يزيد بن هارون وعاده.

"I have never seen Yazeed bin Haaroon praising anyone more than Ahmed bin Hanbal. He used to make him (Ahmed) sit beside him when he would narrate a hadeeth to us; and when Ahmed got sick, Yazeed bin Haaroon rode to him to inquire his well-being."
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/297, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Yazeed bin Haaroon used to respect Imaam Ahmed to a great extent. [See, Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/297, Chain Saheeh; Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 68, Chain Saheeh]

19- A notable Imaam in the field of Asmaa ur-Rijaal, Imaam Yahya ibn Ma'een (D. 233H) said:

أراد الناس أن أكون مثل أحمد بن حنبل لا والله ما أكون مثل احد أبدا.

"The people say that I should become like Ahmed bin Hanbal, no by Allaah, I can never become like him"
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/298, Chain Saheeh]

Abu al-Abbaas Muhammad bin al-Husayn bin Abdur Rahmaan al-Anmaati rahimahullah (D. 293H) said:

كنا فِي مجلس فِيهِ يحيى بْن معين، وأبو خيثمة زهير بْن حرب وجماعة من كبار العلماء فجعلوا، يثنون عَلَى أَحْمَد بْن حَنْبَل ويذكرون فضائله،

فقال رَجُل لا تكثروا بعض هذا القول فقال يحيى بْن معين وكثرة الثناء عَلَى أَحْمَد بْن حَنْبَل يستنكر؟ لو جلسنا مجلسنا بالثناء عَلَيْهِ ما ذكرنا فضائله بكاملها.

"We were in a gathering in which Yahya ibn Ma'een, Abu Khaythamah Zuhayr bin Harb, and a group of Major Scholars were present. They were praising Ahmed bin Hanbal and mentioning his virtues, so a man said: Do not exceed in saying such things. Yahya ibn Ma'een said: Is too much praise of Ahmed bin Hanbal a denouncing act? Even if we started praising him in (all) our gatherings, we will still not be able to completely describe his virtues."
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/169, 170, Chain Saheeh; Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/421, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Yahya ibn Ma'een said:

«مَا رَأَيْتُ مِثْلَ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ؛ صَحِبْنَاهُ خَمْسِينَ سَنَةً مَا افْتَخَرَ عَلَيْنَا بِشَيْءٍ مِمَّا كَانَ فِيهِ مِنَ الصَّلَاحِ وَالْخَيْرِ»

"I have not seen anyone similar to Ahmed bin Hanbal; we have adopted his companionship (Friendship) since 50 years. He never showed any proud to us for whatever righteousness and goodness he possessed"
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/181, Chain Saheeh]

20- Muhaddith Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Haaroon al-Makhrami rahimahullah (D. 265H) said:

إذا رأيت الرجل يقع في أحمد بن حنبل فأعلم أنه مبتدع ضال.

"When you see a man demeaning Ahmed bin Hanbal then know that he is a misguided innovator"
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/309, Chain Saheeh]

21- Muhaddith Ahmed bin Abdullah bin Yoonus al-Yarboo'ee al-Koofi rahimahullah (D. 227H) said:

في الجنة قصر لا يدخله إلا نبي أو صديق أو محكم في نفسه.

"There is a Palace in Jannah in which no one will enter except a Prophet, or a Siddeeque (Truthful person), or Muhakkam fi Nafsihi (a person firm in his self)"

It was asked: **"Who is Muhakkam fi Nafsihi"**

So he replied: **"Ahmed bin Hanbal is Muhakkam fi Nafsih"**
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/310, Chain Saheeh]

This proves that Ahmed bin Yoonus rahimahullah considered Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal to be a Jannati. This is a very huge Tawtheeq, because being a Jannati is a very big Tawtheeq.

Note: Considering someone a Jannati without Wahy (Revelation) is based on Dhann, Qiyaas, and Personal Tahqeeq; but it is not permissible to take evidence from it.

22- A Famous Zaahid person, Abu Nasr Bishr bin al-Haarith al-Haafi rahimahullah (D. 227H) declared the view of Ahmed bin Hanbal to be "Maqaam al-Anbiyaa (Position, as firm as the prophets)" and said:

حفظ الله أحمد من بين يديه ومن خلفه.

"Allaah has protected Ahmed from his front and from his back (from all sides)"
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/310, Chain Saheeh]

Bishr ibn al-Haarith further said:

ابن حنبل ادخل الكير فخرج ذهبه احمر

"(Ahmed) bin Hanbal was entered into a stove, and he came out gold"
[Taareekh Dimashq: 5/307, Chain Hasan]

23- Muhaddith Ali ibn Hajar bin Ayyaas as-Sa'di al-Marwazi al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 244H) described his sorrow by reading the following poem at the death of Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal:

١ : نعى لي إبراهيم أورع عالم	سمعت به من معدم ومخول
٢ : إماما على قصد السبيل وسنة النبي	أمين الله آخر مرسل
٣ : صبورا على ما نابه متوكلا	على ربه في ذاك حق التوكل
٤ : فقلت وفاض الدمع مني بأربع على	النحر فيضا كالجمان المفصل
٥ : سلام عديدالقطر والنجم والثرى	على أحمد البر التقي ابن حنبل
٦ : ألا فتأهب للمنايا فإنما البقاء	قليل بعد ذلك يا على
٧ : كأنك قد وسدت كفك عاجلا	وغودرت منسيا بأوحش منزل
٨ : مقيما به يسفي على قبرك الثرى	عواصف ريح من جنوب وشمأل

[Rough translation]

1: Ibraaheem informed me of the death of the most god-fearing man on earth; more than whom the name of a well-respected person did not reach our ears.

2: He was an Imaam who walked on the straight path and the Sunnah of the Honest, Last Prophet of Allaah

3: He bore with patience whatever difficulty came upon him; and he was a Muatawakkil (Believer) who fulfilled the right of Tawakkul on his Lord.

4: I said and my tears started flowing on my chest from all four sides, like the broken layers of pearls.

5: May Salaam be upon Ahmed Ibn Hanbal equal to the particles of sand, stars, and the drops of rain

6: Wake up, and prepare for death, for verily life is very little after that, O Ali (ibn Hajr).

7: As if you are sleeping taking the palm as a pillow, and soon you are forgotten after taking you to a frightening place.

8: You will stay here and the fast winds from North and South will fly the sand of (around) your grave.

[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/313, Chain Saheeh]

24- Muhaddith Abu Abdur Rahmaan Abdullah bin Dawood bin Aamir al-Hamdaani al-Khazeebi rahimahullah (D. 213H) said: **"Al-Awzaa'ee was the most virtuous in his era, and after him, Abu Ishaaq al-Fazaari is the most virtuous"**

So Nasr bin Ali bin Nasr bin Ali al-Jahdami rahimahullah (D. 250H) said:

“وانا اقول: كان احمد بن حنبل افضل اهل الزمانه”

“And I say: Ahmed bin Hanbal was the most virtuous of his time”
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/167, Chain Saheeh; Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/417, Chain Saheeh]

25- Imaam Ibraaheem bin Ishaaq bin Ibraaheem bin Basheer al-Harbi rahimahullah (D. 285H) said:

سعيد بن المسيب في زمانه وسفيان الثوري في زمانه واحمد بن حنبل في زمانه

“Sa’eed ibn al-Musayyab in his era (was an Imaam), Sufyaan ath-Thawree in his era (was an Imaam), and Ahmed bin Hanbal in his era (was an Imaam)”
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/167, Chain Saheeh; Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/417, Chain Saheeh]

Ibraaheem al-Harbi also said:

قد رأيت رجالات الدنيا لم أر مثل ثلاثة رأيت أحمد بن حنبل، وتعجز النساء أن تلد مثله

“I have seen men of the world, but I did not see anyone similar to three men. I have seen Ahmed bin Hanbal; the women are deprived of giving birth to someone similar to him”
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 7/73, Chain Saheeh; Abul Hasan bin Daleel is Ali bin al-Hasan bin Daleel]

26- Muhaddith Ismaa'eel bin Khaleel al-Khazzaaz rahimahullah (D. 225H) said:

لو كَانَ أَحْمَد بْن حَنْبَل فِي بني إسرائيل لكَانَ آية.

"If Ahmed bin Hanbal had been in Bani Israa'eel, he would have been a sign (i.e. people would have considered him a great sign)"

[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/418, Chain Saheeh]

27- When Imaam Muhammad bin Yahya al-Nisaaboori al-Dhahli rahimahullah (D. 258H) heard the news of the death of Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah, so he said:

«يَنْبَغِي لِكُلِّ أَهْلِ دَارٍ بِبَغْدَادَ أَنْ يُقِيمُوا عَلَى أَحْمَدَ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ النِّيَاحَةَ فِي دُورِهِمْ»

"All the people of Baghdaad should be sorrowful for Ahmed bin Hanbal in their abodes (and houses)"

[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/170, Chain Saheeh]

Being sorrowful here, does not mean mourning like the Shi'aas, rather it only means to express sorrow and grief.

28- Imaam Abu al-Waleed Hishaam bin Abdul Malik at-Tiyaalsi al-Baahili al-Basari rahimahullah (D. 227H) said:

«مَا بِالْبَصْرَتَيْنِ – يَعْنِي بِالْبَصْرَةِ وَالْكُوفَةِ – أَحَدٌ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ»

“No one is more beloved to me in Basrah and Koofah than Ahmed bin Hanbal”
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/171, Chain Hasan; and Taareekh Dimashq: 5/299, Chain Hasan]

Imaam Bukhaari said that Abu al-Waleed said (in Basrah):

"لو ان الذي نزل باحمد بن حنبل كان في بني اسرائيل، كان احدثوه"

“If whatever happened to Ahmed bin Hanbal, had happened in Bani Israa’eel, it would have been a chronicle”
[Al-Taareekh as-Sagheer/Al-Awsat by Bukhaari: 2/344, Chain Saheeh; Al-Kaamil by Ibn Adee: 1/127, Chain Saheeh]

29- Muhaddith Kabeer Abu Aasim ad-Dahhaak bin Makhlad al-Nabeel rahimahullah (D. 212H) said to his student Ahmed bin Mansoor:

«أَقْرِئِ الرَّجُلَ الصَّالِحَ أَحْمَدَ بْنَ حَنْبَلٍ السَّلَامَ»

“Say (my) Salaam to the righteous man, Ahmed bin Hanbal”
[Hilyat al-Awliya: 9/172, Chain Saheeh]

30- Famous Imaam and Faqeeh, Abu Muhammad Ishaaq bin Ibraaheem bin Makhlad al-Handhali al-Marwazi, famous as: Ishaaq bin Rahwayh (D. 238H) said:

«لَوْلَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ، وَبَذْلُ نَفْسِهِ لِمَا بَذَلَهَا لَهُ لَذَهَبَ الْإِسْلَامُ»

“If Ahmed bin Hanbal was not there, and had he not sacrificed his life then (I think) Islaam would have vanished”
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/171, Chain Hasan]

31- Muhaddith Abu al-Hasan Idrees bin Abdul Kareem al-Haddaad al-Maqri al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 292H) said:

«رَأَيْتُ عُلَمَاءَنَا مِثْلَ الْهَيْثَمِ بْنِ خَارِجَةَ، وَمُصْعَبِ الزُّبَيْرِيِّ، وَيَحْيَى بْنَ مَعِينٍ، وَأَبِي بَكْرِ بْنِ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، وَعُثْمَانَ بْنِ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، وَعَبْدِ الْأَعْلَى بْنِ حَمَّادٍ النَّرْسِيُّ، وَمُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمَلِكِ بْنِ أَبِي الشَّوَارِبِ، وَعَلِيِّ بْنِ الْمَدِينِيِّ، وَعُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ الْقَوَارِيرِيَّ، وَأَبِي خَيْثَمَةَ زُهَيْرِ بْنِ حَرْبٍ، وَأَبِي مَعْمَرٍ الْقَطِيعِيِّ، وَمُحَمَّدِ بْنِ جَعْفَرٍ الْوَرْكَانِيِّ، وَأَحْمَدِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَيُّوبَ صَاحِبِ الْمَغَازِي، وَمُحَمَّدِ بْنِ بَكَّارِ بْنِ الرَّيَّانِ، وَعَمْرِو بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ النَّاقِدِ وَيَحْيَى بْنِ أَيُّوبَ الْمَقَابِرِيِّ الْعَابِدِ، وَشُرَيْحِ بْنِ يُونُسَ، وَخَلَفِ بْنِ هِشَامٍ الْبَزَّارِ، وَأَبِي الرَّبِيعِ الزَّهْرَانِيِّ فِيمَنْ لَا أُحْصِيهِمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ وَالْفِقْهِ يُعَظِّمُونَ أَحْمَدَ بْنَ حَنْبَلٍ، وَيُجِلُّونَهُ، وَيُوَقِّرُونَهُ، وَيُبَجِّلُونَهُ، وَيَقْصِدُونَهُ لِلسَّلَامِ عَلَيْهِ»

"I have seen our Scholars like Haytham bin Khaarijah, Mus'ab az-Zubayri, Yahya ibn Ma'een, Abu Bakr bin Abi Shaybah, Uthmaan bin Abi Shaybah, Abdul A'la bin Hammaad al-Narsi, Muhammad bin Abdul Malik bin Abi ash-Shawaarib, Ali ibn al-Madeeni, Ubaydullah bin Umar al-Qawaareeri, Abu Khaythamah Zuhayr bin Harb, Abu Ma'mar al-Qatee'ee, Muhammad bin Ja'far al-Warkaani, Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Ayyoob Saahib al-Maghaazi, Muhammad bin Bakkaar ar-Rayyaan, Amr bin Muhammad al-Naaqid, Yahya bin Ayyoob al-Maqaabiri al-Aabid, Surayj (this is correct) bin Yoonus, Khalf bin Hishaam al-Bazzaar, Abu ar-Rabee' al-Zaahiraani, and many other people of knowledge and Fiqh. They all used to praise Ahmed bin Hanbal. They used to consider him Jaleel ul-Qadr and respect him. They

would admire him, and they would often seek to convey their salaams to him (through whoever went to meet him)"
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/171, Chain Saheeh; Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/416, Chain Saheeh; Taareekh Dimashq: 5/312]

32- Abu Ali al-Hasan bin ar-Rabee' al-Bajali al-Koofi al-Bawraani rahimahullah (D. 220H) said:

"ما شبهت احمد بن جنبل الا بابن المبارك في سمته وهئيته"

"I used to compare Ahmed bin Hanbal to (Imaam) Ibn al-Mubaarak in shape and character"
[Taareekh Dimashq by Ibn al-Asaakir: 5/299, Chain Hasan]

Al-Hasan bin ar-Rabee' used to become happy by remembering Ahmed bin Hanbal.
[See, Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/298, Chain Saheeh]

33- Imaam Abu al-Fadl Al-Abbaas bin Abdul Adheem bin Ismaa'eel al-Anbari al-Basari rahimahullah (D. 240H) said:

رأيت ثلاثة، جعلتهم حجة لي فيما بيني و بين الله تعالي: احمد بن حنبل وزيد بن المبارك و صدقة بن الفضل

"I have seen three men, whom I have made Hujjah (in hadeeth) between me and Allaah the Most High: Ahmed bin Hanbal, Zayd bin al-Mubaarak, and Sadaqah bin al-Fadl"
[Sawalaat al-Barqaani, qalmi, P. 14, (Chain Saheeh), with reference to Mawsoo'ah Aqwaal ad-Daaraqutni: 1/83; and Ibn Asaakir also narrated it (5/301) from Al-Baqraani]

34- A narrator of Hadeeth, Muhanna bin Yahya ash-Shaami rahimahullah said:

«مَا رَأَيْتُ أَحَدًا أَجْمَعُ لِكُلِّ خَيْرٍ مِنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ، وَرَأَيْتُ سُفْيَانَ بْنَ عُيَيْنَةَ وَوَكِيعًا وَعَبْدَ الرَّزَّاقِ وَبَقِيَّةَ بْنَ الْوَلِيدِ وَضَمْرَةَ بْنَ رَبِيعَةَ وَكَثِيرًا مِنَ الْعُلَمَاءِ فَمَا رَأَيْتُ مِثْلَ أَحْمَدَ بْنَ حَنْبَلٍ فِي عَلْمِهِ وَفِقْهِهِ وَزُهْدِهِ وَوَرَعِهِ»

"I have not seen anyone possessing good qualities altogether than Ahmed bin Hanbal; and I have seen Sufyaan ibn Uyaynah, Wakee', Abdur Razzaaq, Baqiyyah bin al-Waleed, Damrah bin Rabee'ah, and many other Scholars; but I have not seen anyone similar to Ahmed bin Hanbal in his knowledge, his Fiqh, his Zuhd, and his piousness"
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/165, 174, Chain Saheeh; Taareekh Dimashq: 5/305, Chain Saheeh]

Note: Muhanna bin Yahya is a Thiqah narrator according to the Jamhoor; therefore he is Hasan ul-Hadeeth. The Jarh of Muhammad bin al-Husayn al-Azdi (who himself is Da'eef) on him is Mardood. For more details, see: Lisaan al-Meezaan (6/108, 109)

35- Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ibraaheem bin Sa'eed al-Bawshanji rahimahullah (D. 290H) said:

١ : إن ابن حنبل إن سألت إمامنا	وبه الأئمة في الأنام تمسكوا
٢ : خلف النبي محمدا بعد الألى	كانوا الخلائف بعده فاستهلكوا
٣ : حذو الشراك على الشراك وإنما	يحذو المثال مثاله المتمسك

1: Certainly (Ahmed) Ibn Hanbal, if you ask, is our Imaam. The Aimmah in the creation have made him Imaam (in Hadeeth and Fiqh).

2: After the death of the Khulafa of Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), he (Imaam Ahmed) became his (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) successor.

3: He is his true follower, walking on his path; and he is an excellent example of his characteristics and personality.
[Taareekh Dimashq: 5/331, Chain Hasan]

36- Imaam Abu Yoosuf Ya'qoob bin Sufyaan al-Faarsi rahimahullah (D. 277H) said:

"كتبت عَنْ ألف شيخ، حجتي فيما بيني وبين اللَّه رجلان..... حجتي أَحْمَد بْن حنبل، وأحمد بْن صالح المصري."

"I have written (ahadeeth) from a thousand teachers. The Hujjah between me and Allaah are two people..... Ahmed bin Hanbal and Ahmed bin Saalih al-Misri are Hujjah according to me"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/199, 200, Chain Saheeh; Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: 1/131, Chain Saheeh]

37- Imaam Abu Haatim ar-Raazi rahimahullah (D. 277H) said:

كان أبو عمر عيسى بن محمد بن النحاس الرملي من عباد المسلمين فدخلت يوما عليه فقال لي: كتبت عن أحمد بن حنبل شيئا؟ قلت –

نعم، قال: فأمل علي –، فأمليت عليه ما حفظت من حديث أحمد بن حنبل.

"Abu ~~Umar~~ Eesa bin Muhammad bin al-Nahaas ar-Ramli (rahimahullah, D. 256H) was among the worshipping Muslims. I went to him one day so he asked me: 'Have you written anything from Ahmed bin Hanbal?' I said: 'Yes'. He said: 'Narrated (that) to Me.', so I narrated the narrations of Ahmed bin Hanbal that I remembered to him."
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/298, Chain Saheeh]

Note: The correct name is "Abu Umayr". See, Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee (P. 132).

38- A Major Muhaddith, the son of another major Muhaddith, Imaam Abu Muhammad Abdur Rahmaan bin Abi Haatim ar-Raazi rahimahullah (D. 327H) said:

ومن العلماء الجهابذة النقاد من الطبقة الثالثة من أهل بغداد أبو عبد الله أحمد بن محمد بن حنبل بن هلال بن أسد الشيباني رحمه الله

"And amongst the Scholars, experts in evaluating good and the best, from the third level from the people of Baghdaad was Abu Abdullah Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Hanbal bin Hilaal bin Asad ash-Shaybaani rahimahullah"
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 1/292]

Imaam Ibn Abi Haatim also wrote a book called "Manaaqib Ahmed" mentioning the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. See, Siyar A'laam al-Nabula (11/178)

39- The Imaam of Asmaa ur-Rijaal, Abu Sa'eed Yahya ibn Sa'eed bin Farokh al-Qattaan al-Basari rahimahullah (D. 198H) said:

«مَا قَدِمَ عَلَيَّ مِثْلُ هَذَيْنِ الرَّجُلَيْنِ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ وَيَحْيَى بْنُ مَعِينٍ»

"No one like the two men: Ahmed bin Hanbal and Yahya ibn Ma'een has ever come upon us"
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/165, Chain Hasan]

Note: A group of Scholars have narrated from the narrator (of this saying) "Muhammad bin Ali as-Simsaar"; and Dhahabi has said that Daaraqutni evaluated him to be "Thiqah" [See, Taareekh al-Islaam by Dhahabi: 21/281]

Yahya al-Qattaan said:

"ما قدم علي من بغداد احب الي من احمد بن حنبل"

"No one from Baghdaad has ever come upon me, who is more beloved to me than Ahmed bin Hanbal"
[Taareekh Dimashq: 5/295, Chain Hasan]

40- Muhaddith Abu Sahl al-Haytham bin Jameel al-Baghdaadi al-Antaaki rahimahullah (D. 213H) said:

«وَأَظُنُّ إِنْ عَاشَ هَذَا الْفَتَى أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ سَيَكُونُ حُجَّةً عَلَى أَهْلِ زَمَانِهِ»

"I think that if this young boy, Ahmed bin Hanbal remains Alive; he will be a Hujjah upon the people of his era"
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/167, Chain Hasan]

This means that Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah right from his youth was among the major Imaams of Ahl us-Sunnah, which is why his teachers used to be very happy with him.

41- A very notable Imaam, Abu Khaythamah Zuhayr bin Harb bin Shaddaad an-Nasaa'ee al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 234H) used to praise Imaam Ahmed rahimahullah and describe his merits. See: # 19, 31.

42- Muhaddith al-Haytham bin Khaarijah al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 227H) used to describe Imaam Ahmed's virtues and praise him. See: # 31.

43- An Expert in Ansaab (Lineages of Narrators), Abu Abdullah Mus'ab bin Abdullah bin Mus'ab bin Thaabit az-Zubayri al-Asdi al-Madani al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 236H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

44- The Author of Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah, Imaam Abu Bakr Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Abi Shaybah Ibraaheem bin Uthmaan al-Waasiti al-Koofi rahimahullah (D. 235H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

45- Muhaddith Uthmaan bin Abi Shaybah rahimahullah (D. 239H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

46- Abu Yahya Abdul A'la bin Hammaad bin Nasr al-Baahli al-Basari al-Narsi rahimahullah (D. 236H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

47- The Teacher of Imaam Muslim, Muhammad bin Abdul Malik bin Abi ash-Shawaarib rahimahullah (D. 244H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

48- Abu Sa'eed Ubaydullah bin Umar bin Maysarah al-Qawareeri al-Basari al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 236H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

49- Abu Ma'mar Ismaa'eel bin Ibraaheem bin Ma'mar bin al-Hasan al-Hadhali al-Qatee'ee rahimahullah (D. 236H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

50- Imaam Abu Imraan Muhammad bin Ja'far bin Ziyaad al-Warkaani al-Khurasaani al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 228H), who died before Imaam Ahmed, used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

51- A reliable narrator according to the Jamhoor, Abu Ja'far Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Ayyoob rahimahullah Saahib al-Maghaazi (D. 228H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

52- Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Bakkaar bin Ar-Rayyaan al-Haashmi al-Baghdaadi ar-Rasaafi rahimahullah (D. 238H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

53- Yahya bin Ayyoob al-Maqaabiri al-Baghdaadi al-Aabid rahimahullah (D. 234H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

54- Abu al-Haarith Surayj bin Yoonus bin Ibraaheem al-Baghdaadi (D. 235H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

55- Qaari Khalf bin Hishaam bin Tha'lab al-Bazzaar al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 229) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

56- Abu ar-Rabee' Sulemaan bin Dawood az-Zahraani al-Ataqi al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 234H) used to praise and describe the virtues of Imaam Ahmed. [See, # 31]

57- Imaam Abu Muhammad Abdullah bin Ali bin al-Jaarood an-Nisaaboori rahimahullah (D. 307H) has narrated from Imaam Ahmed in his famous book "Al-Muthaqqa" [See, Muthaqqa ibn al-Jaarood: 495, 879]

This means that Imaam ibn al-Jaarood considered Imaam Ahmed to be Thiqah and Sudooq.

58- Imaam Abu Ahmed Abdullah bin Adee al-Jarjaani rahimahullah (D. 365H) mentioned Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal among the Aimmah Jarh wat Ta'deel of Asmaa ur-Rijaal before he mentioned Imaam Ibn al-Madeeni and Imaam Ibn Ma'een etc; and he narrated his praise. See, al-Kaamil fi Du'afa ar-Rijaal (1/127, 128)

59- The author of several books, Al-Muhaddith as-Sudooq, Imaam Abu al-Qaasim Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Abdul Azeez al-Baghawi rahimahullah (D. 317H) said:

"حدثنا احمد بن حنبل، امام الدنيا"

"Ahmed bin Hanbal narrated to us, The Imaam of the world"
[Al-Kaamil by Ibn Adee: 1/128, Chain Saheeh]

60- The truthful Muhaddith, Abu Amr Hilaal bin al-'Alaa bin Hilaal bin Umar al-Baahli ar-Raqi rahimahullah (D. 280H) said:

مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى هَذِهِ الأُمَّةِ بِأَرْبَعَةٍ، وَلَوْلاهُمْ لَهَلَكَ النَّاسُ، مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِالشَّافِعِيِّ حَتَّى بَيَّنَ الْمُجْمَلَ مِنَ الْمُفَسَّرِ وَالْخَاصَّ مِنَ الْعَامِ وَالنَّاسِخَ مِنَ الْمَنْسُوخِ وَلَوْلاهُ لَهَلَكَ النَّاسُ، ومَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِأَحْمَدَ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ حَتَّى صَبَرَ فِي الْمِحْنَةِ وَالضَّرْبِ فَنَظَرَ غَيْرُهُ إِلَيْهِ فَصَبَرَ وَلَمْ يَقُولُوا بِخَلْقِ الْقُرْآنِ وَلَوْلاهُ لَهَلَكَ الناس، ومَنَّ الله عليهم بيحي بْنِ مَعِين حَتَّى بَيَّنَ الضُّعَفَاءَ مِنَ الثِّقَاتِ وَلَوْلاهُ لَهَلَكَ النَّاسُ، ومَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِأَبِي عُبَيد حَتَّى فَسَّرَ غَرِيبَ حَدِيثِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَلَوْلاهُ لَهَلَكَ النَّاسُ.

"Allaah showered His favor upon this nation through four men, and if these (men) weren't there, the people would have ruined. Allaah favored them through (Imaam Muhammad bin Idrees) Ash-Shaafi'ee: He distinguished Mufassar and Khaas (Specific) from the Aam (General), and Naasikh (Abrogator) from the Mansookh (Abrogated), if wasn't there, people would have been ruined. And Allaah favored them through Ahmed bin Hanbal: He remained firm and observed patience in trials and (severe) beatings; so looking at him, other people also became firm and did not declare that Qur'aan is created. If he (Ahmed bin Hanbal) was there, people would have been ruined. And Allaah favored them through Yahya ibn Ma'een: He distinguished the weak narrators from the reliable ones, and if he wasn't there, people would have been ruined. And Allaah favored them

through Abu Ubayd (Al-Qaasim bin Salaam): He mentioned the explanation of the difficult words narrated in the traditions of Allaah's Apostle (peace be upon him), if he wasn't there, people would have been ruined."
[Al-Kaamil by Ibn Adee: 1/128, Chain Saheeh]

Hilaal bin Al-'Alaa further said:

" شَيْئَانِ لَوْ لَمْ يَكُونَا فِي الدُّنْيَا لَاحْتَاجَ النَّاسُ إِلَيْهِمَا: مِحْنَةُ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ لَوْلَاهَا لَصَارَ النَّاسُ جَهْمِيَّةً، وَمُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِدْرِيسَ الشَّافِعِيَّ؛ فَإِنَّهُ فَتَحَ لِلنَّاسِ الْأَقْفَالَ "

"If two things had not existed in the world, people would have been left destitute: (1) The trial of Ahmed bin Hanbal, if it was not for it, people would have turned towards Jahmiyyah (from Ahl us-Sunnah); and (2) Muhammad bin Idrees ash-Shaafi'ee; for verily he opened the closed locks for people"
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/181, Chain Saheeh]

61- Thiqah Faqeeh Aabid, Abu Imraan Moosa bin Hizaam at-Tirmidhi al-Balkhee rahimahullah (D: apporx. 251H) said:

«كُنْتُ أَخْتَلِفُ إِلَى أَبِي سُلَيْمَانَ الْجُرْجَانِيِّ فِي كُتُبِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْحَسَنِ، فَاسْتَقْبَلَنِي أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ عِنْدَ الْجِسْرِ»، فَقَالَ لِي: إِلَى أَيْنَ؟ فَقُلْتُ: «إِلَى أَبِي سُلَيْمَانَ». فَقَالَ: الْعَجَبُ مِنْكُمْ تَرَكْتُمْ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ثَلَاثَةً وَأَقْبَلْتُمْ عَلَى ثَلَاثَةٍ، إِلَى أَبِي حَنِيفَةَ، فَقُلْتُ: «كَيْفَ يَا أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ؟» قَالَ يَزِيدُ بْنُ هَارُونَ – بِوَاسِطَ – يَقُولُ: حَدَّثَنَا حُمَيْدٌ. عَنْ أَنَسٍ

قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَهَذَا يَقُولُ: حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ عَنْ يَعْقُوبَ، عَنْ أَبِي حَنِيفَةَ، قَالَ: مُوسَى بْنُ حِزَامٍ: «فَوَقَعَ فِي قَلْبِي قَوْلُهُ فَاكْتَرَيْتُ زَوْرَقًا مِنْ سَاعَتِي فَانْحَدَرْتُ إِلَى وَاسِطَ فَسَمِعْتُ مِنْ يَزِيدَ بْنِ هَارُونَ»

I used to go towards Abu Sulemaan (Moosa bin Sulemaan) al-Juzjaani concerning the books of Muhammad bin al-Hasan (bin Farqad ash-Shaybaani), so (one day) Ahmed bin Hanbal saw me near a bridge and asked: Where are you heading to? I said: To Abu Sulemaan. He said: (I am) amazed at you! You left the three (narrators) towards the Prophet (peace be upon him) and you are going for the (other) three towards Abu Haneefah. So I asked: "What do you mean O Abu Abdullah!?" He replied: Yazeed bin Haaroon in (the city of) Waasit is saying: Humayd narrated to us, from Anas, he said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said (i.e. with only three narrators up to the prophet); while this (Abu Sulemaan) says: "Muhammad bin al-Hasan narrated to us, from Ya'qoob (Qaadhi Abu Yoosuf), from Abu Haneefah (another three only going up to Abu Haneefah)." Moosa bin Hizaam said: "His saying sticked in my heart. I rented a boat, and immediately went to Waasit to hear (narrations) from Yazeed bin Haaroon"

[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/185, Chain Saheeh]

This proves that Moosa bin Hizaam held great respect and honor for Imaam Ahmed (rahimahullah) in his heart.

62- Abu al-Hasan Abdul Wahhaab bin Abul Hakam bin Naafi' al-Warraaq al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 251H) said:

كان اعلم اهل الزمانه

"He (Ahmed bin Hanbal) was the most knowledgeable of the people of his era."
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/418, 419, Chain Hasan; Narrated Ibn al-Jawzee in Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 142]

Abdul Wahhaab al-Warraaq further said:

ابو عبد الله أمامنا وهو من الراسخين في العلم، اذا وقعت غدا بيني يدي الله عزوجل فسالني بمن اقتديت؟ اقول: باحمد، واي شئ ذهب علي ابي عبد الله من امر الاسلام وقد بلي عشرين سنة في هذا الامر

"Abu Abdullah (Ahmed bin Hanbal) is ahead of us, and he is among the Raasikheen (extremely firm) in knowledge; If I were to stand before Allaah the mighty and majestic, and if He asked me, who id you follow (with evidence)? I would say: Ahmed (bin Hanbal); which thing of Islaam is it that remained hidden from Abu Abdullah (Ahmed bin Hanbal). He has been tested with this deen for 20 years"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 142, Chain Hasan]

Note: The teacher of Imaam Ibn al-Jawzee in this narration, Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Abi Taahir Abdul Baaqi al-Bazzaaz, Qaadhi al-Marastaan is Sudooq Hasan ul-Hadeeth. The Jamhoor has declared him reliable.

63- Muhanna bin Yahya said concerning the teacher of Imaam Ahmed and a narrator of Saheehyan, Abu Yoosuf Ya'qoob bin Ibraaheem bin Sa'd bin Ibraaheem bin Abdur Rahmaan bin Awf az-Zuhri al-Madani (D. 208) that:

«رَأَيْتُ يَعْقُوبَ بْنَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بْنِ سَعْدٍ الزُّهْرِيَّ حِينَ أُخْرِجَ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ مِنَ الْحَبْسِ، وَهُوَ يُقَبِّلُ جَبْهَةَ أَحْمَدَ وَوَجْهَهُ»

"When Ahmed bin Hanbal came out of the prison, I saw Ya'qoob bin Ibraaheem bin Sa'd az-Zuhri kissing his forehead and his face"
[Hilyat al-Awliya: 9/172, Chain Hasan]

This proves that Imaam Ahmed was put in prison several times. This story of Muhanna dates back to 208H or before that. Moreover, See: Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed (P. 215, Chain Hasan)

64- Muhanna bin Yahya (Sudooq, see: # 34) said:

وَرَأَيْتُ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنَ دَاوُدَ الْهَاشِمِيَّ يُقَبِّلُ جَبْهَةَ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ وَرَأْسَهُ»

"And I saw (Abu Ayyoob) Sulemaan bin Dawood (bin Dawood bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbaas) al-Haashimi (Al-Baghdaadi al-Faqeeh rahimahullah, D. 219H) kissing the forehead and face of Ahmed bin Hanbal"
[Hilyat al-Awliya: 9/172, Chain Hasan]

65- Muhaddith Kabeer, Ahmed bin Ibraaheem bin Katheer bin Zayd ad-Dauraqi an-Nukri al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 246H) saw (Imaam Ahmed) Ibn Hanbal in Makkah. His body had gotten extremely weak and the signs of pain and hardship were apparent on his face, so he said:

يَا أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، لَقَدْ شَقَقْتَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ فِي خُرُوجِكَ إِلَى عَبْدِ الرَّزَّاقِ.

“O Abu Abdullah, you have put yourself in hardship by going towards Abdur Razzaaq (in Sana’a, Yemen – to take narrations from him)”

So Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal said:

«مَا أَهْوَنَ الْمَشَقَّةَ فِيمَا اسْتَفَدْنَا مِنْ عَبْدِ الرَّزَّاقِ»

“This hardship is nothing compared to the benefit we gained from Abdur Razzaaq”
[Hilyat al-Awliya: 9/184, Chain Saheeh]

This proves that Muhaddith Dauraqi had concern for Imaam Ahmed

Khateeb Baghdaadi has narrated from Ahmed bin Ibraaheem ad-Dauraqi that he said:

من سمعتموه يذكر أَحْمَد بْن حَنْبَل بسوء فاتهموه عَلَى الإسلام.

“If you hear someone talking ill of Ahmed bin Hanbal then doubt his Islaam”
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/420, Chain Hasan Ghareeb; Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed of Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 494, 495]

This proves that Ahmed bin Ibraaheem rahimahullah did not even consider the one who maligns Imaam Ahmed to be a proper Muslim. He considers such a person to be Misguided and an Innovator.

Tahqeeq of the chain: Abu Abdur Rahmaan Muhammad bin Yoosuf an-Nisaaboori was Sudooq [Taareekh Baghdaad: 3/411]

Muhammad bin Hamzah ad-Dimashqi was Thiqah and mild towards Tashee’ [Taareekh Dimashq: 55/381]

Yoosuf bin al-Qaasim al-Qaadhi was Thiqah [Taareekh Dimashq: 69/234]

Abu Ya'la (Ahmed bin Ali bin al-Muthanna) at-Tameemi (Al-Mawsali) is the Famous Thiqah Imaam and the author of Musnad Abi Ya'la. Walhamdulillah.

66- The author of al-Mustadrak and Taareekh Nishaaboor, Imaam Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Abdullah al-Haafidh al-Haakim rahimahullah (D. 405H) mentioned Imaam Ahmed among the Fuqaha of Islaam.
[See, Ma'rifah Uloom ul-Hadeeth, P. 72]

Imaam Haakim has narrated more than 300 narrations from Imaam Ahmed in al-Mustadrak. Imaam Haakim said about a narration narrated through the chain of Imaam Ahmed that:

"This hadeeth is Saheeh with this chain"
[Al-Mustadrak: 4/236 H. 7585]

67- Imaam Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Idrees bin al-Abbaas ash-Shaafi'ee al-Mutlabi al-Makki al-Misri rahimahullah (D. 204H) said:

"خرجت من بغداد وما خلفت بها أفقه ولا أزهد ولا أورع (ولا أعلم) من أحمد بن حنبل"

"I left Baghdaad and did not leave behind more Faqeeh, more Ascetic, more God-Fearing, and more knowledgeable than Ahmed bin Hanbal"
[Ma'rifah Uloom ul-Hadeeth by Haakim: P. 72 H. 140, Chain Hasan; Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/419; Taareekh Dimashq: 5/298; and Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed of Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 107]

Note: The narrator of this narration, Ya'qoob bin Abdullah al-Khawaarzimi, is Hasan ul-Hadeeth; Imaam Haakim and Dhahabi both have declared his hadeeth to be Saheeh. See: Al-Mustadrak (2/605 H. 4192).

Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee said to Imaam Ahmed:

«يَا أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ , أَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْأَخْبَارِ الصِّحَاحِ مِنَّا، فَإِذَا كَانَ خَبَرٌ صَحِيحٌ فَأَعْلِمْنِي حَتَّى أَذْهِبَ إِلَيْهِ كُوفِيًّا كَانَ أَوْ بَصْرِيًّا أَوْ شَامِيًّا»

"O Abu Abdullah, you know more authentic narrations than us, so if there is a Saheeh report then inform me (about it) so that I can follow it, no matter if it is Koofi, Basari, or Shaami (report)."
[Hilyat al-Awliya: 9/170, Chain Saheeh]

68- Abu Nasr al-Fath bin Shakhraf bin Dawood bin Muzaahim al-Aabid rahimahullah (D. 273H) said:

وَابْنِ حَنْبَلٍ فِي زَمَانِهِ

"And Ibn Hanbal (was the biggest Scholar) of his period"

Upon hearing this, Abu Abdullah al-Haarith bin Asad al-Muhaasibi al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 243H) said:

أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ نَزَلَ بِهِ مَا لَمْ يَنْزِلْ بِسُفْيَانَ الثَّوْرِيِّ وَالْأَوْزَاعِيِّ

"Ahmed bin Hanbal suffered through hardships which did not befall Sufyaan ath-Thawree and al-Awzaa'ee"
[Hilyat al-Awliya: 9/167, Chain Hasan; Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 121, Chain Hasan]

69- Al-Fath bin Shakhraf az-Zaahid al-Aabid rahimahullah counted Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal among the Major Scholars of his time. [See, 68]

70- Haafidh Abu Ya'la al-Khaleel bin Abdullah bin Ahmed bin Khaleel al-Khaleeli Al-Quzwayni rahimahullah (D. 446H) said concerning Imaam Ahmed:

"وكان أفقه أقرانه وأورعهم"

"And he was the biggest Faqeeh and righteous person of his time"
[Al-Irshaad fi Ma'rifah Uloom ul-Hadeeth: 2/597 T. 302]

71- Imaam Abu Dawood Sulemaan bin al-Asha'th bin Ishaaq bin Basheer bin Shaddaad al-Azdi as-Sijistaani rahimahullah (D. 275H) took many narrations from Imaam Ahmed.
[See, Sunan Abu Dawood: 385, 517, 1428, 1837, 1907, 1951, 2016, 2370, 2374, & 4000]

Muhaddith Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Muhammad bin Abdul Malik famous as: Ibn al-Qattaan al-Faasi rahimahullah (D. 628H) said:

"وأبوداود لا يروي إلا عن ثقة عنده"

"Abu Dawood did not narrate except from the one who is Thiqah according to him"
[Bayaan al-Wahem al-Ayhaam fi Kitaab al-Ahkaam: 3/466 H. 1227; and Nasb ur-Rayaa: 1/199]

This proves that Imaam Ahmed is Thiqah according to Imaam Abu Dawood.

Note: Imaam Abu Dawood compiled the masaail that he heard from Imaam Ahmed in a book. This book (in 326 pages) is published since long time.

72- Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Ismaa'eel bin Ishaaq bin Saalim al-Ash'aree rahimahullah (D. 324H) said:

قولنا الذي نقول به، وديانتنا التي ندين بها، التمسك بكتاب الله ربنا عز وجل، وبسنة نبينا محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم، وما روى عن السادة الصحابة والتابعين وأئمة الحديث، ونحن بذلك معتصمون، وبما كان يقول به أبو عبد الله أحمد بن محمد بن حنبل – نضر الله وجهه ورفع درجته وأجزل مثوبته – قائلون، ولمن خالف قوله مخالفون؛ لأنه الإمام الفاضل، والرئيس الكامل، الذي أبان الله به الحق، ودفع به الضلال، وأوضح به المنهاج، وقمع به بدع المبتدعين، وزيع الزائغين، وشك الشاكين، فرحمة الله عليه من إمام مقدم، وخليل معظم مفخم و علي جميع أئمة المسلمين.

"The opinion and Aqeedah that we follow is to hold firm to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and whatever is narrated (authentically) from Sahaabah, Taabi'een and Aimmah of Hadeeth and this is what we recourse to. And we also follow that which Abu Abdullah Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Hanbal says – May Allaah flourish his face and raise his level and give him the best reward. The one who opposes his (agreed upon) sayings then we abstain from him, because he (Ahmed) was the Imaam al-Faazil, and Ra'ees al-Kaamil. Allaah clarified the truth through

him and drove the misguidance away through him. He cleared out the Manhaaj (for the people) and destroyed through him: the innovation of innovators, deviation of deviators, and doubt of doubters. May Allaah shower His mercy over this Muqaddam Imaam and great Friend and over all the Aimmah of Muslimeen"
[Al-Ibaanah An Usool ad-Diyaanah: P. 8]

73- Imaam Abu Nu'aym Ahmed bin Abdullah al-Asbahaani rahimahullah (D. 430H) mentioned Imaam Ahmed among the Awliyaa of this Ummah and wrote several pages in his Manaaqib and said:

الْإِمَامُ الْمُبَجَّلُ وَالْهُمَامُ الْمُفَضَّلُ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ. لَزِمَ الِاقْتِدَاءِ، وَظَفِرَ بِالِاهتِدَاءِ

"The Honorable Imaam courageous and noble asset; Abu Abdullah Ahmed bin Hanbal, held firm to the Iqtidaa (of Kitaab-o-Sunnah, Ijmaa and Athaar) and remained on Hidaayah"
[Hilyat al-Awliya: 9/161]

And he said:

وَكَانَ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ عَالِمًا زَاهِدًا وَعَامِلًا عَابِدًا.

"And he (Ahmed), may Allaah have mercy upon him, was a Scholar, a Zaahid, an Aamil, an Aabid person"
[Hilyat al-Awliya: 9/174, also see: Hilyat al-Awliya: 9/221]

74- Haafidh Ameer Abu Nasr Ali bin Hibatullah famous as: Ibn Makoola rahimahullah (D. 475H) said:

إمام في النقل وعلم في الزهد والورع، وكان أعلم الناس بمذاهب الصحابة والتابعين

"He was an Imaam in narrations and outstanding in Zuhd and righteousness; and he was the most knowledgeable of all people concerning the Madhaahib of Sahaabah and Taabi'een"
[Al-Ikmaal: 2/563; Taareekh Dimashq: 5/287, Chain Saheeh up to Ibn Makoola]

75- Haafidh Abu al-Farj Abdur Rahmaan bin Ali bin Muhammad Ibn al-Jawzee rahimahullah (D. 597H) said:

الإمام... وجمع حفظ الحديث والفقه والزهد والورع

"He was an Imaam.... He had preserved Hadeeth, Fiqh, Zuhd and Righteousness (in him)"
[Al-Muntazim fi Taareekh al-Malook: 11/286]

Haafidh Ibn al-Jawzee wrote a lengthy book in Manaaqib of Imaam Ahmed called "Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal" which is published (without Tahqeeq in 533 pages), and this whole book is with chains.

76- Imaam Abu Bakr Ahmed bin Ali bin Thaabit al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 463H) said:

"إمام المحدثين، الناصر للدين، والمناضل عن السنة، والصابر في المحنة"

"He (Ahmed) was an Imaam of Muhadditheen, helper of Deen, defender of Sunnah, and patient in trial."
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/412 T. 2317]

Khateeb mentioned Imaam Ahmed among the famous Thiqah Muhadditheen. [See, al-Kifaayah fi Ilm ur-Riwaayah: P. 87 – Baab fil Muhaddith al-Mashhoor Bil-Adaalah wath-Thiqah]

77- Haafidh Zayaa ud-Deen Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Abdul Waahid bin Ahmed bin Abdur Rahmaan al-Maqdisi rahimahullah (D. 643H) declared Imaam Ahmed to be Thiqah by narrating several narrations from him in his famous book "Al-Ahadeeth al-Mukhtaarah" [See for example: Al-Mukhtaarah: 1/74 H. 2…]

And he said:

"رواه الإمام أحمد"

"Narrated by al-Imaam Ahmed"
[1/78 H. 5]

78- Haafidh Abu al-Qaasim Ali bin al-Hasan bin Hibatullah, Ibn Asaakir rahimahullah (D. 571H) said:

"أحد الأعلام من أئمة الإسلام"

"(Imaam Ahmed) was one of the Scholars and among the Aimmah of Islaam"
[Taareekh Dimashq: 5/284]

79- Imaam Abu Bakr Ahmed bin al-Husayn bin Ali bin Moosa al-Bayhaqi al-Khuraasaani rahimahullah (D. 458H) wrote a book in virtues of Imaam Ahmed named "Manaaqib Ahmed" in one Volume. [See, Siyar A'laam al-Nabula: 18/166]

80- The author of the book named Dhimm al-Kalaam, Abu Ismaa'eel Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ali bin Matt al-Ansaari al-Harwi

rahimahullah (D. 481H) wrote a book named "Manaaqib Ahmed". See: Dhimm al-Kalaam by al-Harwi (Tahqeeq of Abdullah bin Muhammad al-Ansaari 3/295 H. 689); Siyar A'laam al-Nabula (11/349); & Majmoo Fatawa Ibn Taymiyyah (6/177)

Abu Ismaa'eel al-Harwi wrote many poems in praise of Imaam Ahmed [See, Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 433, Chain Saheeh]

81- Qaadhi Abu al-Husayn Muhammad bin Abi Ya'la Muhammad bin al-Husayn bin Muhammad bin Khalf bin al-Faraa al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 526H) wrote in explanation to "Imaam fil Hadeeth" that:

"فهذا مالا خلاف فيه ولا نزاع، حصل به الوفاق والإجماع"

"There is neither difference nor dispute (that Imaam Ahmed is Imaam fil Hadeeth). There is agreement and Ijmaa on this." [Tabaqaat al-Hanaabilah: 1/5]

Qaadhi Ibn Abi Ya'la wrote a book named "Fadhaail Ahmed" [See, Siyar A'laam al-Nabula: 18/91]

82- Qaadhi Abu Muhammad Abdullah bin Yoosuf al-Jarjaani rahimahullah (D. 489H) wrote a book in Manaaqib of Imaam Ahmed. See, Siyar A'laam al-Nabula (19/159)

83- Imaam Abu al-Qaasim Sulemaan bin Ahmed bin Mutayr At-Tabaraani al-Lakhmi ash-Shaami rahimahullah (D. 360H) wrote a book in Manaaqib of Imaam Ahmed named "Manaaqib Ahmed". See: Siyar A'laam al-Nabula (16/128)

84- Imaam Abu Zakariyyah Yahya bin Abi Amr Abdul Wahhaab bin Abi Abdullah Muhammad bin Ishaaq bin Muhammad bin Yahya bin

Mandah Al-Abdi Al-Asbahaani rahimahullah (D. 541H) wrote a book named “Manaaqib Ahmed”. See: Siyar A’laam al-Nabula (11/298)

85- The Famous Imaam of Asmaa ur-Rijaal, Haafidh Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Uthmaan adh-Dhahabi rahimahullah (D. 748H) said concerning Imaam Ahmed:

هو الإمام حقا وشيخ الإسلام صدقا

“This is the reality that he was an Imaam, and it is the truth that he was Shaykh ul-Islaam”
[Siyar A’laam al-Nabula: 11/177]

He has written the introduction of Imaam Ahmed in one Volume. See: Al-Kaashif fi Ma’rifah man Lahu Riwaayah fi al-Kutub as-Sittah [1/26 T. 77]

86- Shaykh ul-Islaam al-Imaam al-Qaduwwah, Abu Abdur Rahmaan Baqi bin Makhlad al-Qurtubi al-Andalusi rahimahullah (D. 276) has narrated Masaail and Fawaaid from Imaam Ahmed. [Siyar A’laam al-Nabula: 13/286; also see: Tahdheeb al-Kamaal: 1/229]

Baqi bin Makhlad only narrates from those who are Thiqah according to him. [See, Tahdheeb at-Tahdheeb: 1/22 T. Ahmed bin Jawaas]

87- Haafidh Abu al-Hajjaaj Yoosuf bin Abdur Rahmaan bin Yoosuf al-Qaadhi al-Mizzi rahimahullah (D. 742H) said:

مناقب هذا الإمام وفضائله كثيرة جدا، لو ذهبنا نستقصيها، لطال الكتاب، وفيما ذكرنا كفاية.

“The characteristics and virtues of this Imaam are way too many. If we started compiling all of them, the book would become lengthy; whatever we have mentioned is enough”
[Tahdheeb al-Kamaal: 1/470]

88- Imaam Abu Muhammad Ja’far bin Ahmed bin al-Hasan bin Ahmed as-Siraaj al-Baghdaadi al-Qaari al-Adeeb rahimahullah (D. 500H) wrote a long poem on Imaam Ahmed’s death, in which he said:

مناقبه إن لم تكن عالما بها

If you are unaware of his (Ahmed’s) Manaaqib

فكشف طروس القوم عنهن و اسأل

Then have a look at the books of Scholars, or ask them

لقد عاش في الدنياء حميدا موفقا

He (Ahmed) remained in Dunya with praises and prosperous

وصار إلي الأخري إلي خير منزل

And then went towards the best place of the Akhirah

[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 232, Chain Saheeh]

89- Haafidh Abu al-Fadl Ahmed bin Ali bin Hajr al-Asqalaani rahimahullah (D. 852H) said:

"أحمد بن محمد بن حنبل..... أحد الأئمة، ثقة حافظ فقيه حجة"

“Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Hanbal..... is one of the Aimmah, Thiqah Haafidh Faqeeh Hujjah”
[Taqreeb at-Tahdheeb: 96]

90- Haafidh Abu al-Fidaa Ismaa'eel bin Umar bin Katheer ad-Dimashqi rahimahullah (D. 774H) named a chapter "Al-Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal" and then wrote the Manaaqib and Fadhaail of Imaam Ahmed in several pages. See: Al-Bidaayah wal Nihaayah (10/340-358)

Haafidh Ibn Katheer also said:

"والإمام أحمد من أئمة أهل العلم رحمه الله وأكرم مثواه"

"Al-Imaam Ahmed was among the Aimmah of the people of knowledge. May Allaah have mercy upon him and grant him an honored place."
[Al-Bidaayah wal Nihaayah: 10/351]

91- The famous Imaam of Hadeeth, Imaam Abu Sufyaan Wakee' bin al-Jarraah bin Mulayh ar-Rawaasi al-Koofi rahimahullah (D. 197H) said:

"لست أحدث عنه، نهاني إحمد بن حنبل أن أحدث عنه"

"I do not narrate from him (Khaarijah bin Mus'ab); Ahmed bin Hanbal has forbade me to narrate from him"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee P. 71, Chain Hasan]

92- Imaam Abu Ishaaq Ibraaheem bin Shamaas al-Samarqandi al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 221H) said:

"كنت أعرف أحمد بن حنبل وهو غلام، وهو يحيي الليل"

"I know Ahmed bin Hanbal from his Childhood; he used to wake up at night (to worship Allaah)"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 288, Chain Hasan]

93- Haafidh Abu al-Husayn Ahmed bin Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Ubaydullah bin Abi Dawood bin Al-Manaadi al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 336H) wrote a book named "Fadhaail Ahmed". See: Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee (P. 302)

94- Qaari Abu Muzaahim Khaaqaani: Moosa bin Ubaydullah bin Yahya bin Khaaqaan rahimahullah (D. 325H) wrote a Qaseedah in praise of Imaam Ahmed in which he said:

لقد صارفي الآفاق أحمد محنة   وأمر الوري فيها فليس بمشكل

"Ahmed has become a trial in the world, and the matter of people concerning him is not difficult"

تري ذا الهوي لأحمد مبغضا   وتعرف ذاالتقوي بحب ابن حنبل

"You would see that (every) innovator holds hatred from Ahmed, and you would know that (every) righteous man loves Ibn Hanbal"

[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 431, Chain Saheeh]

95- When Shaykh ul-Islaam Abu Bakr Ahmed bin Muhammad bin al-Hajjaaj al-Marwazi rahimahullah (D. 275H) departed for Jihaad, so fifty thousand (50,000) men also joined him. So Al-Marwazi started crying and said:

"ليس هذا العلم لي وإنما هذا علم أحمد بن حنبل"

"This is not my knowledge; rather this is the knowledge of Ahmed bin Hanbal (which I have learned from him)"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 506, 507, Chain Saheeh]

96- Shams ud-Deen Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Jazri rahimahullah (D. 833H) said:

"أحد أعلام الأمة وأزهد الأئمة"

"He (Ahmed) was among the Scholars of this Ummah and among the Zaahid Aimmah"
[Ghaayat un-Nihaayah fi Tabaqaat ul-Qurra: 1/112 T. 515]

He also said:

"شيخ الإسلام وأفضل الأعلام في عصره وشيخ السنة وصاحب المنة علي الأمة"

"He (Ahmed) was Shaykh ul-Islaam and the most virtuous of Major Scholars in his time and Shaykh of Sunnah, and the man who favored this Ummah"
[Al-Mus'ad al-Ahmed fi Khatm Musnad Al-Imaam Ahmed, with tahqeeq of Ahmed Shaakir: 1/35]

97- Imaam Hajjaaj bin Abi Ya'qoob Yoosuf bin Hajjaaj ash-Shaa'ir ath-Thaqafi al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 259H) said:

"I once kissed the forehead of Ahmed and said, 'O Abu Abdullah! You have reached the level of Sufyaan and Maalik... and your have excelled them in Amaanah'"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 134, Chain Saheeh]

98- Imaam Abu Ja'far Ahmed bin Sa'eed bin Sakhr ad-Daarimi al-Sarkhasi rahimahullah (D. 253H) said:

"ما رأيت أسود الرأس أحفظ لحديث رسول الله ﷺ... من أبي عبد الله أحمد بن حنبل"

"I have not seen any black headed (i.e. young) person bigger preserver of the hadeeth of Allaah's Apostle (ﷺ) than Abu Abdullah Ahmed bin Hanbal"
[Taareekh Dimashq: 5/310, Chain Hasan]

99- The teacher of Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal, Haafidh Abu Bakr Abdur Razzaaq bin Hammaam bin Naafi' al-Humayri as-Sana'aani rahimahullah (D. 221H) author of Musannaf Abdur Razzaaq said:

"ما قدم علينا مثل أحمد بن حنبل"

"No one like Ahmed bin Hanbal ever came upon us"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 69, Chain Hasan, also See; Manaaqib Ahmed P. 70, Chain Saheeh]

100- Saalih bin Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah (D. 266H) said:

لم يزل أبي يصلي في مرضه قائما، أمسكه فيركع ويسجد، وأرفعه في ركوعه وسجوده ودخل عليه مجاهد بن موسي فقال: يا أبا عبد الله! قد جاءتك البشري، هذا الخلق يشهدون لك، ماتبالي لووردت علي الله عزوجل الساعة، وجعل يقبل يده ويبكي، وجعل يقول: أوصني يا أبا عبدالله! فأشار إلي لسانه.

"My Father kept on performing prayers standing position during his disease (of his death). I used to hold him so he would do Ruku and Sujood. And I used to raise him from his ruku and

sujood. (Abu Ali) Mujaahid bin Moosa (bin Farokh al-Khawaarzimi al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah, D. 244H) came to him and said: 'O Abu Abdullah! There is good news for you, all these people are testifying for you. If, this time, you ascend towards Allaah then there is nothing for you to worry to about.' He (Mujaahid bin Moosa) was kissing his hand, crying and said: 'O Abu Abdullah! Gibe me some Advise.' So he (Ahmed bin Hanbal) pointed towards his tongue (indicating that you must watch your tongue)"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 407, Chain Saheeh]

Dear Readers! I have mentioned before you complete one hundred (100) sayings and narrations of the famous Muhadditheen and Scholars concerning the praise and tawtheeq of Imaam Ahl us-Sunnah Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah (D. 241H) with Saheeh and Hasan chains of transmission and with their respective references.

There are many sayings which have been omitted because of the briefness (of this risalah). For example: The praise and admiration of Sawaar al-Qaadhi rahimahullah for Imaam Ahmed, see; Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee (P. 407, Chain Saheeh)

The reference of many Scholars like: Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn al-Qayyim, Al-Aynee, and Suyooti etc have been omitted because of the fear of length.

I have deliberately omitted the sayings and narrations which are not proven with Saheeh or Hasan chains, because there is no Hujjah in Da'eef narrations and neither is it correct to take evidence from them. For example, Haafidh Ibn Asaakir has narrated with an authentic chain from Abdul Kareem bin Ahmed bin Shu'ayb an-Nasaa'ee that my Father (Imaam Nasaa'ee) said: **"Abu Abdullah Ahmed bin Hanbal is Thiqah al-Ma'moon, one of the Imaams"**
[Taareekh Dimashq: 5/291]

However, the tawtheeq of Abdul Kareem bin Nasaa'ee is not proven. The mention of Abdul Kareem, without any Tawtheeq is given in the following books:
Al-Ansaab by as-Sama'aani (5/484) & Taareekh al-Islaam by Dhahabi (29/299)

Therefore, this chain is Da'eef because of the Jahaalah of Abdul Kareem.

Note: Imaam Nasaa'ee has mentioned Imaam Ahmed among the Fuqaha of Khurasaan [Aakhir Kitaab ad-Du'afa: P. 272]

I have also deliberately omitted the references of those, from whom the tawtheeq and praise of Imaam Ahmed is proven, but they themselves are weak. For example:

Sufyaan bin Wakee' bin al-Jarraah (D. 247H) said: **"Ahmed is a trial according to us; the one who speaks ill of Ahmed then he is a Faasiq according to us"** [Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/420, Chain Saheeh up to Sufyaan]

Although this saying is authentically proven from Sufyaan bin Wakee' bin al-Jarraah, but Sufyaan bin Wakee' himself is Weak due to his scrolls. See: Al-Taareekh al-Sagheer by Imaam Bukhaari (2/355), and Taqreeb at-Tahdheeb (2456) etc.

All the Scholars are agreed upon the praise of Imaam Ahmed as Haafidh Ibn al-Jawzee has written in his famous book "Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed" [See, P. 137]

Note: Imaam Abu Haatim ar-Raazi has preferred Imaam Ahmed over his teacher Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee in Ilm al-Hadeeth [See, Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 500, Chain Saheeh]

Haafidh Ibn al-Jawzee writes:

ولما وقع الغرق ببغداد في سنة أربع وخمسين وخمس مائة، وغرقت كتبي، سلم لي مجلد فيه ورقتان بخط الإمام أحمد

"When Baghdaad was afflicted with flood in 554H; my books also drowned away, except a book in which two pages were hand-written by Imaam Ahmed"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 297]

This proves that Allaah saved the two pages written by Imaam Ahmed from drowning. And Allaah has control over all things.

The Zuhd of Imaam Ahmed

1- Saalih bin Ahmed bin Hanbal (D. 266H) said:

"كان أبي ربما أخذ القدوم وخرج إلي السكان يعمل الشئ بيده، وربما خرج إلي البقال فيشتري الجزرة الحطب الشئ فيحمله بيده"

"Sometimes, my father would take the adze and went out to the urban place to work with his hand. And sometimes he would go out to the shop and buy a bundle of woods and some (other) thing and bring them (home) carrying them with his hands."
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 274, Chain Saheeh]

2- Imaam Ahmed rahimahullah said:

"I used to go to the borders by walking (during the Jihaad in order to gather woods), then we would gather (woods). I saw that (some) people were ruining the crops of (some) people. It is not permissible for anyone to enter the crops of someone without his permission"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 225, Chain Saheeh]

3- Saalih bin Ahmed bin Hanbal said;

"I saw that sometimes my father would pick up a (dry) piece (of bread from the surface), then he would clear out the dirt from it, then he would put it into the cup, then he would wash it by pouring water over it, and then he would eat it with salt. I never saw him buying pomegranate, quince (a pear-shaped fruit), or other fruits, except that he would (sometimes) buy a watermelon and eat it with bread, grape, or date. Besides this, I never saw him buying anything (like this)"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 251, Chain Saheeh]

4- Abdullah bin Ahmed bin Hanbal said:

"My Father was only seen in Masjid, Funeral Prayers, and in his visit to a sick person. He did not like to wander in the market places"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam: P. 279, 280, Chain Saheeh]

5- It is narrated from Abdullah bin Ahmed in another narration:

"My father was the most patient in loneliness among all the people. He was only seen in Masjid, Funeral Prayer and in visit to a sick person. He did not like to wander in markets."
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 280, Chain Saheeh]

6- Abdullah bin Ahmed said:

"When my father grew old and aged, he became (more) busy in the recitation of Qur'aan, and performing a lot of Nawaafil between Dhuhr and Asr. When I used to go to him, he would stop praying; he would talk and at times he would remain silent. Upon seeing this, when I would go outside, he would begin praying again. I saw that he would (always) remain busy in a lot of secluded Quranic recitation."
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 288, Chain Saheeh]

7- Abu Bakr al-Marwazi rahimahullah said:

"I stayed with Abu Abdullah (Ahmed bin Hanbal) in a camp for about four months. He never abandoned the Qiyaam of late-night and recitation of the (early) morning. I would never know when he finished reciting the whole Qur'aan because he used to keep it a secret."
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 198, Chain Saheeh]

8- Abdullah bin Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah said:

"My Father used to perform 300 Nawaafil every day and night. When he got weak after receiving slashes so he started performing 150 rak'aat in a day and night. He had reached close to 80 (years of age). He used to recite one-seventh part of Qur'aan every day. He used to finish the whole Qur'aan every seventh day. (This means) Every week, he used to finish one Qur'aan. He used to sleep very little after Isha then remain busy in prayer and du'aas until the morning."
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 286, Chain Saheeh]

He used to spend the nights awake since his childhood. See, the sayings of praise # 92

9- He used to eat a very little food as described by (his student) Abu Bakr al-Marwazi. See: Manaaqib Ahmed (P. 373, Chain Saheeh)

10- Imaam Abu Dawood Sulemaan bin al-Asha'th as-Sijistaani rahimahullah said:

"(The Abbasid Caliph) Mutawakkil summoned him (Ahmed bin Hanbal), When he (rahimahullah) came to him, he (Mutawakkil) ordered (for his servants) to clear out the palace and spread carpets for him (Imaam Ahmed). There used to be the foods of several different kinds in his food-table. He (the caliph) asked (Imaam Ahmed) to teach Hadeeth to his sons, but Imaam Ahmed refused. He neither sat on his carpets nor did he ever look at his food-table. He used to observe fasts (very often). When the time for Iftaari would arrive, he would tell his companion (student) to buy for him a soup of . He would break his fast with that. He remained in this condition for several days. [A man named] Ali bin al-Jaham from Ahl us-Sunnah used to hold a good opinion concerning him. He said to the Ameer ul-Mu'mineen (Al-Mutawakkil): This is a Zaahid person; he has no concern (with these things). Ameer ul-Mu'mineen (AL-Mutawakkil) permitted him to go back, so Ahmed (bin Hanbal) returned to his home"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 374, Chain Saheeh]

11- Imaam Ahmed rahimahullah used to remain very worried with the Fitan of this world. He said:

"I used to wish for death (during the days of receiving slashes), and (now) this matter is even more severe than that. That was the Fitnah of Deen. I could bear the beatings and prison, (but now) this is the Fitnah of Dunya"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 277, Chain Saheeh]

12- Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah said:

“I was brought to the house (of prison), I did not eat anything for two days. So when I was beaten up with slashes, they brought to me the drink of barley; I refused to drink it and completed my fast”
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 335, Chain Saheeh]

13- Saalih bin Ahmed bin Hanbal said:

“A person, who used to treat flogs etc, saw my father (Ahmed bin Hanbal) and said: ‘I have also seen such a person who received 1000 flogs but I never saw such a beating (that Imaam Ahmed received)’. There were the signs of beating over his back and on the chest. Then he took the stitch and inserted it into some of the wounds and said that this stitch could not reach to the end of the wound. He used to come and treat him. He (Imaam Ahmed) had also received some flogs on his face. He remained lying prone (on the surface) for as long as Allaah wished. Then he said: ‘This is one thing (i.e. the torn skin of the wound) that I want to cut’. That Doctor used to hold the skin with a tong and cut it with a knife. He (Imaam Ahmed) remained patient and thankful in this condition, and he would keep praising Allaah. Then Allaah cured him but the pain of wounds remained with him at several places. His back remained affected due to flogs until his death. May Allaah have mercy upon him! He used to say: ‘By Allaah, I have tried my best, all I want is that I be saved from the punishment (of Allaah) and if my matter balances out then it would be more than enough’”
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 346, 347, Chain Saheeh]

Imaam Abu Haatim ar-Raazi rahimahullah said:

“I went to Imaam Ahmed after about three years he received flogs and I asked: ‘Have the effects of flogs been healed?’ so he

told me taking his left hand out that it has been (completely) palsied and its pain is still being felt."
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 347, Chain Saheeh]

Note: Some tyrants had beaten up Imaam Ahl us-Sunnat Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah very severely with flogs concerning the issue of Khalq-e-Qur'aan, whose bellwether was a devil named Ahmed bin Abi Dawood.

It is the Aqeedah of Imaam Ahmed and all the Ahl us-Sunnah that the Glorious Qur'aan is the speech of Allaah Ta'ala and is not a creation. Whereas, Ibn Abi Dawood – the Mu'tazali used to go around saying that Qur'aan is a creation (Allaah's refuge is sought).

This filthy Mu'tazali had also made some foolish rulers join his cause, turning them into Jahmi.

14- Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah forgave those people who beat him up following the order of the King.
[See, Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 344, Chain Saheeh]

15- Imaam Abdur Razzaaq bin Hammaam as-Sana'aani rahimahullah said:

"(Imaam) Ahmed stayed with us for about 2 years. I tried to gift him with Deenaar (i.e. a lot of money) but he refused to accept it and said: 'Anaa Bikhayr (I am fine)'"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 226, Chain Hasan]

16- Imaam Ahmed used to mention good things about his friend in prison, Muhammad bin Nooh (rahimahullah), who had advised him in the prison to remain firm, (saying) you are not like me; all the people are looking up to you. In 218 H, Muhammad bin Nooh

rahimahullah passed away, so Imaam Ahmed led his funeral prayer staying in the prison.
[See, Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 315, 316, Chain Saheeh; & Taareekh Baghdaad: 3/323, Chain Saheeh]

17- Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Taahir (A ruler appointed by the Abbasids) tried to have a meeting with Imaam Ahmed, but he (rahimahullah) refused to meet him.
[See, Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 379, Chain Saheeh]

He used to stay away from the rulers and money. May Allaah have mercy upon him.

Seerat Imaam Ahmed

1- Imaam Ahmed used to apply henna to his beard even at the age of 63. See, Hilyat al-Awliyaa (9/126, Chain Saheeh) & Manaaqib Ahmed (P. 208, Chain Saheeh)

2- Nooh bin Habeeb rahimahullah (D. 242H) said:

"I saw in 198 H that (Imaam) Abu Abdullah Ahmed bin Hanbal (rahimahullah) was giving the Dars of Fiqh and Hadeeth to Ashaab ul-Hadeeth leaning next to a pillar at Masjid Haneef (Mina, Makkah). He also used to give Fatawa on the issues of Hajj"
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/164, Chain Saheeh]

3- Saalih bin Ahmed describes:

"My Father had a cap which he himself had sewed. It (the cap) contained cotton. He (Imaam Ahmed) would wear it when he

would stand for the night prayer. He used to recite Surah Kahf very often"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 287, Chain Saheeh]

4- Imaam Ahmed used to finish the recitation of Qur'aan every Friday. After that, he would make du'aa and his children etc would say Aameen.
[See, Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 369, Chain Saheeh]

His Death

1- Abdullah bin Ahmed bin Hanbal said:

"No one heard my father whining during his sickness until his death"
[Hilyat al-Awliyaa: 9/183, Chain Saheeh; Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 408]

2- Abu al-Nadr Ismaa'eel bin Abdullah bin Maymoon bin Abdul Hameed al-Ijlee rahimahullah (D. 270H) said:

"I came to Abu Abdullah (Ahmed bin Hanbal) to meet him during his last moments of life. He came outside and sat on the threshold, so I asked: 'O Abu Abdullah, you used to remain silent on certain issues of Fiqh, have you now adopted any opinion concerning them?' He replied: 'O Abu an-Nadr, this is the time of departure (from the world), this is the era of actions.' He kept on talking things like this until we stood up"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 288, Chain Hasan]

3- Abu Bakr al-Marwazi said:

“Abu Abdullah (Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah) fell ill on 2 Rabi’ ul-Awwal 241 H on a Wednesday night, and remained sick for nine days”
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 404, Chain Saheeh]

The people visiting to inquire about his health used to come in groups after groups saying Salaam to him, so he (Imaam Ahmed) would reply them by pointing. Ibn Taahir (A Ruler) and some Judges asked permission to visit him but Imaam Ahmed did not permit them. During his last sickness, Imaam Ahmed called little children and affectionately wiped his hand over their heads. He would perform prayer sitting down and laying down. Even in this condition, he used to do Raf’ ul-Yadayn before going to ruku

(Al-Marwazi) said: I helped him (Imaam Ahmed) perform Wudoo on a Thursday, so he told me to do Khilaal of his fingers. He was reciting “Laa Ilaaha Illallah…” on the day of Friday and had his face turned towards the Qiblah. His soul left his body before afternoon and people started crying (on streets) saying that the whole world has ruined.
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 406, Chain Saheeh]

4- Saalih bin Ahmed said:

“My Father kept on moving his tongue until he passed away [i.e. he was reciting the Kalima (Laa Ilaaha Illallah)]”
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 409, Chain Saheeh]

5- Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Ubaydullah bin Nasr bin Ubaydullah bin Sahl bin az-Zaaghooni al-Baghdaadi al-Hanbali rahimahullah (D. 527H) said:

“When Shareef Abu Ja’far was buried next to his (Imaam Ahmed’s) grave, so the grave of our Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal

opened up. His body had not changed (safe ad sound) and even the shroud had not rotted"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 483, Chain Saheeh]

6- Muhammad bin Mihraan al-Jamaal, Abu Ja'far ar-Raazi rahimahullah, Thiqah Haafidh (D. 239H) had seen a very good dream about Imaam Ahmed after his death; but it is not necessary to mention it here.
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed: P. 435, Chain Saheeh]

7- Imaam Abu Dawood Sulemaan bin al-Asha'th as-Sijistaani rahimahullah had seen a divine dream concerning Imaam Ahmed in 228H.
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 469, Chain Saheeh]

There is no need of mentioning this or other dreams here and neither does it have any special benefit. Deen is not based on dreams but on Evidences. Walhamdulillah!

The books of Imaam Ahmed

The names of some of the books that Imaam Ahmed wrote or had them written are as follows:

1- **Musnad al-Imaam Ahmed –** (Has been Published for a long time in 6 volumes. Recently, it is published in 50 volumes with Tahqeeq and Takhreej)

2- **Kitaab Fadhaail us-Sahaabah (Book in virtues of Sahaabah) –** (Published in 2 volumes with the Tahqeeq of Ash-Shaykh as-Saalih al-Imaam Waseeullaah bin Muhammad Abbaas al-Hindi al-Madani al-Makki hafidhahullah)

3- **Kitaab az-Zuhd (Book of Asceticism) –** (Published in one volume).

4- **Kitaab al-Ashribah (Book of Drinks) –** (Published in one volume).

5- **Ahkaam un-Nisaa (Rulings concerning Women) –** (A small pamphlet that has been published)

6- **Kitaab al-Eemaan (?)**

7- **Kitaab an-Nawaadir (?)**

Some people have attributed the book "Fadhaail as-Sahaabah" to the son of Imaam Ahmed, "Abdullah bin Ahmed", without any proof. Wallahu a'lam!

8- **Kitaab al-Illal wa Ma'rifat ur-Rijaal –** (Published in 2 Volumes. It has also been published with the Tahqeeq of Shaykh Waseeullaah al-Makki)

Note: There are some books and pamphlets attributed to Imaam Ahmed which are not proven from him at all. For example:

Kitaab as-Salaat – is a fabricated book. [See, Siyar A'laam al-Nabula: 11/330]

Risaalah al-Musee'i fis Salaat – is Baatil. [See, Siyar A'laam al-Nabula: 11/287]

Ar-Radd Ala al-Jahmiyyah – is Fabricated. [Al-Nabula: 11/286].

Risaalah al-Istakhri – is not proven. [See, Al-Nabula: 11/286 and Tabaqaat al-Hanaabilah with my Ta'leeq: 1/24-36]

The letter of Imaam Ahmed to Musaddad is also not proven with an authentic chain. [See, Tabaqaat al-Hanaabilah: 1/341-345]

Answer to Doubts concerning Musnad al-Imaam Ahmed

The book of Imaam Ahl-e-Sunnat Shaykh ul-Islaam Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Hanbal rahimahullah (D. 241H), "Al-Musnad" has always remained famous and well-known among the Muhadditheen. Haafidh Abu Moosa al-Madeeni rahimahullah (D. 581H) has also written a risaalah in specialties of this Musnad named, "Khasaais al-Musnad", which is published with Musnad Ahmed (Tahqeeq: Ahmed Muhammad Shaakir Vol. 1, P. 20-27). Imaam Dhahabi said concerning Haafidh Abu Moosa Muhammad bin Abi Bakr al-Madeeni rahimahullah:

"He is al-Imaam al-Allaamah, al-Haafidh al-Kabeer, Ath-Thiqah Shaykh ul-Muhadditheen"
[Siyar A'laam al-Nabula: 21/152]

Since some Rejecters of Hadeeth from 14th & 15th century have tried to scratch some concocted doubts and allegations on Musnad Al-Imaam Ahmed, therefore, in this short and succinct article we will present to you the Tahqeeqi proof of Musnad Ahmed from Asmaa ur-Rijaal, Books of Hadeeth, and un-refutable evidences:

The Proof of Musnad Ahmed from external evidences

1- Imaam Abdullah bin Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah (D. 290H) said:

"سألت أبي عن عبد العزيز بن أبان، قال: لم أخرج عنه في المسند شيئا"

"I asked my father (Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah) about Abdul Azeez bin Abaan (a Matrook narrator), he said: I have not narrated anything from him in al-Musnad"
[Kitaab al-Illal wa Ma'rifat ur-Rijaal: 2/357 # 1858; Kitaab ad-Du'afa al-Kabeer by Ukaylee: 3/16, Chain Saheeh; Al-Kaamil by Ibn Adee: 5/1926; Taareekh Baghdaad: 10/445]

2- Abdullah bin Ahmed said:

"وضرب أبي علي حديث كثير بن عبد الله بن عمرو بن عوف ولم يحدثنا بها في المسند"

"My Father (Ahmed bin Hanbal) crossed out the ahadeeth of Katheer bin Abdullah bin Amr bin Awf (A severely weak narrator), and did not narrate these narrations to us in 'al-Musnad'"
[Kitaab al-Illal wa Ma'rifat ur-Rijaal: 2/211 # 1495]

3- Hanbal bin Ishaaq bin Hanbal bin Hilaal bin Asad ash-Shaybaani rahimahullah (D. 273H) said:

"جمعنا أحمد بن حنبل: أنا و صالح و عبد الله وقرأ علينا المسند وما سمعه منه غيرنا"

"Ahmed bin Hanbal gathered us: Me, Saalih, and Abdullah and recited upon us 'Al-Musnad'. No on, besides us, heard this Musnad from him"

[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 191, Chain Hasan; & Khasaais al-Musnad by Abu Moosa al-Madeeni: P. 21]

4- Abu Abdullah al-Haakim an-Nisaaboori (D. 405H) said:

"هذا الحديث في المسند لأبي عبدالله أحمد بن حنبل هكذا"

"This is how this hadeeth is narrated in the Musnad of Abu Abdullah Ahmed bin Hanbal"
[Al-Mustadrak: 3/157 H. 4745]

5- Abu al-Qaasim Abdul Waahid bin Ali bin Burhaan al-'Ukburi al-Hanafi (D. 456H) said:

"وله كتاب غريب الحديث، صنفه علي مسند أحمد بن حنبل"

"And he (Abu Umar Muhammad bin Abdul Waahid al-Nahwi az-Zaahid, D. 345H) has authored a book 'Ghareeb al-Hadeeth' on Musnad Ahmed bin Hanbal"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 2/358, 359 T. 865, Chain Saheeh]

6- Muhaddith Kabeer, Shaykh ul-Islaam, Abu Moosa al-Madeeni rahimahullah (D. 581H) wrote a risaalah on the specialties of Musnad Ahmed named "Khasaais al-Musnad" and said:

"وهذا الكتاب أصل كبير ومرجع وثيق لأصحاب الحديث"

"And this book is a reliable source and a great Asal for the companions of Hadeeth"
[Khasaais al-Musnad: P. 21]

7- Abu al-Hasan Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Ali bin Muhammad bin Ja'far bin Haaroon, known as: Ibn Abi Shaykh, said:

"وسمعت من أبن مالك القطيعي جميع مسند أحمد بن حنبل"

"And I have heard the whole Musnad Ahmed bin Hanbal from (Ahmed bin Ja'far) Ibn Maalik al-Qatee'ee"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 1/324 T. 225, Chain Saheeh]

8- Khateeb Baghdaad said concerning Ibn al-Mudhhib:

"وكان يروي عن ابن مالك القطيعي مسند أحمد بن حنبل بأسره"

"He narrates the whole Musnad Ahmed bin Hanbal from Ibn Maalik al-Qatee'ee"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 7/390 T. 3927]

9- Abu Ya'la al-Khaleeli rahimahullah (D. 446H) said:

"سمع من بغداد مسند أحمد بن حنبل من القطيعي"

"He heard Musnad Ahmed bin Hanbal from al-Qatee'ee in Baghdaad."
[Al-Irshaad fi Ma'rifah Uloom ul-Hadeeth: 2/740]

10- Al-Zaya al-Maqdisi rahimahullah (D. 643H) said concerning a narration:

"ولم أر هذا الحديث في مسند أحمد"

"And I did not see this hadeeth in Musnad Ahmed"
[Al-Ahadeeth al-Mukhtaarah: 8/382 H. 472]

11- Ibn Nuqtah al-Baghdaadi (D. 629H) said:

"سمعت منه مسند أحمد وكان شيخا صالحا"

“I heard Musnad Ahmed from him, and he was a pious Shaykh”
[Al-Taqiyeed: P. 466 T. 627]

12- Yaqoot bin Abdullah al-Hamawi (D. 626H) said concerning Ahmed bin Ja’far bin Hamdaan bin Maalik al-Qatee’ee:

"وبطريقه يروي مسند أحمد بن حنبل"

“And Musnad Ahmed bin Hanbal is narrated through his chain”
[Mu’jam al-Baladaan: 4/377, also see: Mu’jam al-Baladaan: 2/81]

Similarly, Ibn al-Jawzee, Haafidh Dhahabi, Haafidh Ibn Katheer, Haafidh Ibn Taymiyyah, Haafidh Ibn al-Qayyim, and Haafidh Ibn Hajar etc have attributed Musnad Ahmed to Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal with Jazm (Affirmative)

Shaykh Muhammad Naasir ud-Deen al-Albaani has provided the references of more than 20 Scholars in his book “Al-Dhabb al-Ahmed ‘An Musnad al-Imaam Ahmed” who consider Musnad Ahmed to be the work of Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal.

These were a few external un-refutable evidences proving that Musnad Ahmed is really the book of Imaam Ahmed and this great book has always been famous and reliable among the Mutaqaddimeen and Muta’khireen. Haakim Nishaaboori has narrated more than 300 narrations from Imaam Ahmed in his famous book “Al-Mustadrak”. For example, see: Al-Mustadrak (1/130 H. 447) and al-Musnad (5/277)

Tahqeeq of the Sanad (Chain of Transmission) of Musnad Ahmed

The chain of Musnad Ahmed is as follows:

"أَخْبَرَنَا الشَّيْخُ أَبُو الْقَاسِمِ هِبَةُ اللهِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْوَاحِدِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ الْحُصِينِ الشَّيْبَانِيُّ قِرَاءَةً عَلَيْهِ، وَأَنَا أَسْمَعُ، فَأَقَرَّ بِهِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَلِيٍّ الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيِّ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ التَّمِيمِيُّ الْوَاعِظُ، وَيُعْرَفُ بِابْنِ الْمُذْهِبِ، قِرَاءَةً مِنْ أَصْلِ سَمَاعِهِ، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو بَكْرٍ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ حَمْدَانَ بْنِ مَالِكٍ الْقَطِيعِيُّ، قِرَاءَةً عَلَيْهِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ حَنْبَلِ بْنِ هِلَالِ بْنِ أَسَدٍ، مِنْ كِتَابِهِ...."

[Vol. 1 P. 2 before H. 1]

From the first narrator of Musnad Ahmed to Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah, the chain is Saheeh and Hasan Lidhaatih.

The mention of each of the narrators of Musnad Ahmed with sequence is as follows:

1- The First Narrator of Musnad Ahmed: Abdullah bin Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah (D. 290H).

Ibn Abi Haatim ar-Raazi said: **"He is Sudooq Thiqah"**
[Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel: 5/7]

Khateeb Baghdaadi said: **"He is Thiqah Thabat and an Understanding person"**
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 9/375]

Ibn al-Jawzee said: **"He is Haafidh Thiqah Thabat"**
[Al-Muntazim: 13/17]

Haafidh Ibn Hajar said: **"Thiqah"**
[Taqreeb at-Tahdheeb: 3205]

Haafidh Dhahabi said: **"He is Sayyin, Devout, Truthful, Man of Hadeeth and Ittiba and intelligent with (the knowledge of) Rijaal"**
[Siyar A'laam al-Nabula: 13/524]

Haafidh Ibn Katheer said: **"He is an Imaam, Haafidh, and Thabat"**
[Al-Bidaayah wal Nihaayah: 11/103]

Ibn al-Jazri said: **"He is Thiqah, well-known – the son of a major Imaam"**
[Ghaayat al-Nihaayah fi Tabaqaat al-Qurra: 1/408]

Haafidh Dhahabi said: (Abu al-Husayn Ahmed bin Ja'far) Ibn al-Manaadi said in his Taareekh: **"....We saw our major Shuyookh testifying to his (Abdullah's) knowledge of Rijaal, Illal of Hadeeth, Names of Narrators, and perseverance for seeking knowledge of hadeeth"**
[Taareekh al-Islaam: 21/199; Siyar A'laam al-Nabula: 13/521]

Ibn al-Ammaad al-Hanbali said: **"He is Thabat, Intelligent, and Thiqah"**
[Shadhrat adh-Dhahab: 2/203]

Haakim Nishaaboori said concerning a hadeeth narrated by Abdullah bin Ahmed: **"This hadeeth is Saheeh with this chain"**
[Al-Mustadrak: 4/236, H. 7585]

2- **The Second Narrator of Musnad Ahmed:** Abu Bakr Ahmed bin Ja'far bin Hamdaan bin Maalik al-Qatee'ee (D. 368H).

After a long discussion, Abu Bakr al-Barqaani finally said:
"Otherwise, he is Thiqah"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/74 T. 1697, Chain Saheeh]

And said: **"until it got proven to me that he is Sudooq and there is not doubt in his Samaa'"**
[Same: P. 74, Chain Saheeh]

Ibn al-Jawzee said: **"He is Katheer ul-Hadeeth, Thiqah"**
[Al-Muntazim: 14/261]

Haakim declared the hadeeth narrated by him to be Saheeh.
[Al-Mustadrak: 4/236]

And He (Haakim) criticized the one who criticizes Ahmed bin Ja'far. Haakim knew his (Ahmed bin Ja'far's) condition very well
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/74, Chain Saheeh]

Ibn al-Jazri said: **"Thiqah Mash-hoor Musnad"**
[Ghaayat un-Nihaayah fi Tabaqaat al-Qurra: 1/43 T. 179]

Dhahabi said: **"He is Ash-Shaykh al-Aalim al-Muhaddith"**
[Siyar A'laam al-Nabula: 16/210]

He also said: **"Sahha..... Sudooq in himself, Maqbool, got deteriorated a little (at the end of his age)"**
[Mizaan al-I'tidaal: 1/87]

Note: If Haafidh Dhahabi writes the sign of "Sahha" along with the name of a narrator then that means he is Thiqah according to him.

See; Lisaan al-Meezaan (2/109, 7/167) & Al-Badar al-Muneer by Ibn al-Mulaqqin (1/608)

Ibn Katheer said: **"He is Thiqah Katheer ul-Hadeeth"**
[Al-Bidaayah wal Nihaayah: 11/312]

Al-Zaya al-Maqdisi has narrated many narrations from Ahmed bin Ja'far al-Qatee'ee in al-Mukhtaarah, e.g. see: (1/83 H. 8)

Abu Nu'aym al-Asbahaani has narrated several narrations from Ahmed bin Ja'far in "Al-Mustakhraj Ala Saheeh Muslim". For example, see; (1/275 H. 502)

After this excellent tawtheeq, now let's observe Jarh and its reality.

Khateeb said:

"حدثت عن أبي الحسن بن الفرات قال: كان ابن مالك القطيعي مستوا صاحب سنة كثير السماع [سمع] من عبد الله بن أحمد وغيره إلا أنه خلط في آخر عمره وكف بعده وخرف حتي كان لا يعرف شيئا مما يقرأ عليه"

"I narrated from Abu al-Hasan bin al-Faraat, he said: Ibn Maalik al-Qatee'ee is a Mastoor, man of Sunnah, Katheer us-Samaa; he heard from Abdullah bin Ahmed and others, except that he became confused at the end of his age, and relinquished after that, and became weak in memory until he did not know anything from what was recited to him"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/74]

In this saying, the teacher of Khateeb is unknown and Majhool. Abu al-Hasan Muhammad bin al-Abbaas bin Ahmed bin Muhammad bin al-Faraat al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah died in 384H, whereas, Khateeb Baghdaadi rahimahullah was born in 392H. Therefore this chain is Mardood because of being Munqati'.

1: Abu al-Fath Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Faaras bin Abi al-Fawaaris al-Baghdaadi rahimahullah (D. 412H) said:

"أبو بكر بن مالك كان مستورا صاحب سنة، ولم يكن في الحديث بذاك، له في بعض المسند أصول فيها نظر ذكر أنه كتبها بعد الغرق"

"Abu Bakr bin Maalik was a Mastoor, a man of Sunnah; and he was not strong in Hadeeth. There is problem with some of his Usool in al-Musnad. It is mentioned that he wrote them after the Gharq (Flood)."
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/74]

Besides Taqreeb at-Tahdheeb of Haafidh Ibn Hajar and Usool ul-Hadeeth, Mastoor is also referred to as a Thiqah and pious person according to the terminology of Muta'khireen. This Jarh is rejected due to two reasons:

First: It is against the tawtheeq of Jamhoor.
Second: It is concerning Ikhtilaat, and the discussion on Ikhtilaat is coming ahead, in-shaa-Allaah.

2: Khateeb Baghdaadi said:

"He was a narrator of many narrations. He narrated Al-Musnad, Kitaab az-Zuhd, Al-Taareekh and al-Masaail etc from Abdullah bin Ahmed. Some of his books had drowned away, so I narrated from those manuscripts in which he did not have his samaa'.

This is why the people criticized him, but we have seen that no one has ever stopped from narrating and taking hujjah from him. Among the Mutaqaddimeen, Daaraqutni and Ibn Shaaheen have narrated from him"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/73]

This Jarh is also rejected due to two reasons:

First: It is against the tawtheeq of Jamhoor.
Second: It is related to Ikhtilaat.

3: Ibn al-Lubaan al-Fardi (Thiqah Imaam) said concerning Ahmed bin Ja'far:

"لا تذهبوا إليه فإنه قد ضعف واختل"

"Do not go to him (to hear ahadeeth) because he has become weak and afflicted with Ikhtilaat"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 4/74]

This Jarh is also related to Ikhtilaat.

Haafidh Ibn al-Jawzee, Haafidh Dhahabi, and Allaamah Abdur Rahmaan bin Yahya al-Mu'allami al-Yamaani etc have also preferred the tawtheeq of Jamhoor rejecting the Jarh of Jaariheen. For example see, Al-Tankeel bima fi Ta'neeb al-Kawthari min al-Abaateel (1/101 T. 12)

When Ibn as-Salaah al-Shahrazuri criticized Ahmed bin Ja'far for Ikhtilaat, so Haafidh Abu al-Fadl bin al-Husayn al-Iraaqi said:
"Daaraqutni, Ibn Shaaheen, Haakim, Al-Barqaani, Abu Nu'aym al-Asbahaani, and Abu Ali bin al-Mudhhib have heard narrations from Ahmed bin Ja'far before his Ikhtilaat"
[See, Al-Taqiyeed wal Ayzaah (P. 465)]

Haafidh Ibn Hajar said:

"كان سماع أبي علي بن المذهب منه لمسند الإمام أحمد قبل
إختلاطه، أفاده شيخنا الحافظ أبو الفضل بن الحسين"

"The Sama of Abu Ali ibn al-Mudhhib from him for Musnad al-Imaam Ahmed is from before his Ikhtilaat. This is told by our Shaykh Abu al-Fadl Ibn al-Husayn"
[Lisaan al-Mizaan: 1/145, 146]

This proves that the objection of Ikhtilaat in the chain of Musnad Ahmed is rejected.

3- **The Third Narrator of Musnad Ahmed:** Abu Ali al-Hasan bin Ali bin Muhammad at-Tameemi famous as: Ibn al-Mudhhib (D. 444H).

Imaam al-Zaya al-Maqdisi has done his tawtheeq by narrating several narrations from Ibn al-Mudhhib in al-Mukhtaarah. For example see, (1/83 H. 8). This means that he was Thiqah according to Imaam Zaya al-Maqdisi.

Ibn al-Jawzee said: **"We do not know anything about him except good (things) and devoutness"**
[Al-Muntazim: 15/337]

Ibn Katheer said: **"He is devout and pious person"**
[Al-Bidaayah wal Nihaayah: 12/68]

Dhahabi said: **"al-Imaam al-'Aaalim, Musnad al-Iraaq"**
[Siyar A'laam al-Nabula: 17/640]

Haafidh Dhahabi has proven that he is Thiqah according to him by writing the sign of "**Sahha**" by his name. [See, Meezaan al-I'tidaal: 1/511]

Hibatullah bin Muhammad bin Abdul Waahid ash-Shaybaani said: **"Ash-Shaykh, Al-Muhaddith al-'Aalim informed us"**
[Al-Mus'ad al-Ahmed by Shams ud-Deen ibn al-Jazri: P. 29]

As compared to this, Khateeb Baghdaadi, Abu Taahir as-Salafi, and Shajaa' al-Dhuhali have done Jarh on Ibn al-Mudhhib. The Jarh of Khateeb is against his own tawtheeq. Khateeb said after narrating a narration from Ibn al-Mudhhib:

"All the narrators of this chain are Thiqah"
[Taareekh Baghdaad: 14/36 H. 738]

This proves that Khateeb retracted from his Jarh; therefore his Jarh is Mansookh.

As for the Jarh of as-Salafi and al-Dhuhali then they are rejected because of being against the Jamhoor.

Conclusion: Ibn al-Mudhhib is a Hasan ul-Hadeeth narrator.

4- **The fourth narrator who narrates Musnad Ahmed is:** Hibatullah bin Muhammad bin Abdul Waahid ash-Shaybaani (D. 525H).

Ibn al-Jawzee said:

"وكان ثقة صحيح السماع، وسمعت منه مسند الإمام أحمد جميعه"

"And he is Thiqah Saheeh us-Samaa, I heard from him the whole Musnad al-Imaam Ahmed"
[Al-Muntazim: 17/268]

Ibn al-Najjaar said:

وكان شيخا حسنا متيقظا صدوقا صحيح السماع

"He is a Shaykh, good (person), cautious, truthful, Saheeh us-Samaa"
[Al-Mustafaad min Zayl Taareekh Baghdaad by Ibn Dimyaati: 19/251]

Dhahabi said:

"كان دينا صحيح السماع"

"He is a devout person and his sama (hearing) is Saheeh"
[Al-Abar: 2/427]

He also said:

الشيخ الجليل، المسند الصدوق، مسند الآفاق..

"He is a grand Shaykh, al-Musnad as-Sudooq, Musnad al-Afaaq"
[Siyar A'laam al-Nabula: 19/536]

Ibn Katheer said:

وكان ثقة ثبتا صحيح السماع

"He is Thiqah Thabat, his Samaa' is Saheeh"
[Al-Bidaayah wal Nihaayah: 12/218]

Ibn al-'Ammaad said:

وكان دينا صحيح السماع

“He is devout person, his samaa is Saheeh”
[Shadhraat adh-Dhahab: 4/77]

The student of Hibatullah bin Muhammad, “Abu Ali Hanbal bin Abdullah bin al-Faraj al-Baghdaadi al-Rasaafi” said about him:

"أخبرنا الشيخ الصدر العالم الصالح المعمر، رئيس العراق، المسند...."

“Narrated to us: Ash-Shaykh as-Sadr al-‘Aalim al-Saalih al-Mu’ammar, the head of Iraaq, al-Musnad……”
[Al-Mus’ad al-Ahmed: P. 29]

Compared to this excellent tawtheeq of Hibatullah bin Muhammad, there is no criticism mentioned concerning him.

Note: The narrator of Musnad Ahmed from Hibatullah bin Muhammad is “Hanbal bin Abdullah bin al-Faraj (D. 604 H)”. See: al-Mawsoo’ah al-Hadeethiyyah (1/161)

Ibn Nuqtah said concerning Hanbal:

"وكان سماعه صحيحا"

“And his Samaa is Saheeh”
[Al-Taqiyeed P. 259 T. 320; also see, Siyar A’laam al-Nabula: 21/431]

Shams ud-Deen Ahmed bin Abdul Waahid as-Sa’di al-Maqdisi said:

"أخبرنا به الشيخ الصالح الثقة المسند أبو علي حنبل بن عبد الله..."

“Narrated to us from it: Ash-Shaykh as-Saalih ath-Thiqah al-Musnad, Abu Ali Hanbal bin Abdullah…”
[Al-Mus’ad al-Ahmed: P. 29]

This Tahqeeq proves that the chain of Musnad Ahmed is Hasan Lidhaatih and proven. And from the external proofs, we come to know that Musnad Ahmed is Saheeh and Thaabit. Therefore, the attack of Munkireen Hadeeth on this book is rejected, walhamdulillah!

Note: The chains and texts of Musnad are also found abundantly in other books, for example: The first hadeeth of Musnad Ahmed is narrated from Abdullah bin Numayr; and the same narration is also narrated from the chain of Abdullah bin Numayr in Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah (15/174, 175 H. 3757), Sunan Ibn Maajah (4005), and Musnad Abu Bakr as-Siddeeque by al-Marwazi (88). For other chains other than Ibn Numayr see, Sunan Abu Dawood (4338), Musnad al-Humaydi (with my tahqeeq: 3), Saheeh Ibn Hibbaan (Al-Ihsaan: 304), and Musnad Abu Ya’la (132). This narration is Saheeh. At-Tirmidhi said: **“This hadeeth is Hasan Saheeh”**.

Many Scholars like Abdullah bin Ahmed, Hanbal bin Ishaaq, Ibn al-Jawzee, Abu Moosa al-Madeeni, Khateeb Baghdaadi, Dhahabi, Ibn Hajar, Ibn Katheer, Haakim, as-Subki (Tabaqaat ash-Shaafi’eeyyah al-Kubra: 1/201), and many others consider Musnad Ahmed to be the book of Imaam Ahmed. [See, the proof of Musnad from external evidences, # 12]

There is no Muhaddith in our knowledge who has ever denied that Musnad Ahmed is the book of Imaam Ahmed. Therefore, there is the Ijmaa of all Muhadditheen that Musnad Ahmed is the book of Imaam Ahmed. Wal-Hamdulillaahi Rabbil Alameen, wama Alayna Illal Balagha.

Imaam Ahmed and Sahaabah Karaam

1- Abdullah bin Ahmed said:

"قلت لأبي: من الرافضي؟ قال: الذي يشتم أبي بكر و عمر – قال وسألت أبي عن رجل يشتم رجلا من أصحاب رسول الله صلي الله عليه وسلم؟ قال: ماأراه علي الإسلام"

"I asked my Father: Who is Raafidi? He replied: The one who abuses Abu Bakr and Umar. I asked my Father about a person who abuses the Sahaabah of Allaah's Apostle (ﷺ)? He replied: I do not consider such a person to be upon Islaam"
[Manaaqib al-Imaam Ahmed by Ibn al-Jawzee: P. 165, Chain Saheeh]

2- Abdul Malik bin Abdul Hameed al-Maymooni said that (Imaam) Ahmed bin Hanbal said:

"إذا رأيت رجلا يذكر أحدا من أصحاب رسول الله صلي الله عليه وسلم بسؤ فاتهمه علي الإسلام"

"When you see a person mentioning the companions of Allaah's Apostle (ﷺ) with foul language then you should reconsider your opinion about him as a Muslim"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 160, Chain Saheeh]

3- Imaam Ahmed rahimahullah used to say that Abu Bakr and Umar (radiallah anhum) are the men of Jannah.
[Masaail Abdullah bin Ahmed: 3/1320 T. 1830; Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 160, Chain Saheeh]

4- Muhammad bin Awf said that Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah said:

"...ومن قدم عليا علي عثمان فقد طعن علي رسول الله و أبي بكر و عمر و علي المهاجرين ولا أحسب يصلح له عمل"

"The one who prefers Ali over Uthmaan has ridiculed Allaah's Apostle (ﷺ), Abu Bakr, Umar, and the Muhaajireen; and I do not think that any of his action is accepted"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 162, Chain Saheeh]

5- The stance and Aqeedah of Imaam Ahmed rahimahullah on the issue of Fadheelat was that (after the Prophet) Abu Bakr is the most virtuous (of all men among the Ummah), then comes Umar, and then Uthmaan. After this, he used to remain silent (do not give preference to anyone over anyone).
[Masaail Abdullah bin Ahmed: 3/1318]

6- Concerning Khulafa Raashideen, the Aqeedah of Imaam Ahmed was that Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthmaan, and Ali were among the Khulafa (i.e. the rightly guided caliphs).
[Masaail Abdullah bin Ahmed: 3/1319 # 1832; Masaail Abu Dawood: P. 277]

He held this view based on the hadeeth narrated by Safeenah (radiallah anhu). This narration is narrated in Musnad Ahmed (5/221), Sunan Abu Dawood (4646), Sunan Tirmidhi (2226) and others with a Hasan chain.

7- It is narrated from Ibn Haani that Imaam Ahmed was asked:

“A man abuses (Sayyidunah) Mu’aawiyah (radiallah anhu); is it permissible to pray behind him? He replied: ‘No, the prayer should not be offered behind him. He has not respect’”
[Sawalaat Ibn Haani: 296]

8- The people who used to say that we do not consider (Sayyidunah) Mu’aawiyah (radiallah anhu) to be Khaal al-Mu’mineen (The Uncle of the believers) then Imaam Ahmed would get severely angry at them. [See, As-Sunnah by al-Khallaal: 658, Chain Saheeh]

A man asked Imaam Ahmed about a person who used to say, **“I do not consider Mu’aawiyah to be the Scribe of Revelation (Kaatib Wahi), and neither do I consider him the Khaal al-Mu’mineen. He forcefully took over the Caliphate”,** so Imaam Ahmed replied:

"هذا قول سؤ ردئ، يجانبون هؤلاء القوم (لا) يجالسون ونبين أمرهم للناس"

“This is a bad abominable saying, these people must be boycotted, and neither one should sit with them. And people should be bewared of them.”
[As-Sunnah by al-Khallaal: 659, Chain Saheeh]

9- Abu Bakr al-Marwazi asked Imaam Ahmed whether Mu’aawiyah (radiallah anhu) was more virtuous or Umar bin Abdul Azeez. So he replied: **Mu’aawiyah was more virtuous, we do not consider anyone equal to the Sahaabah**. [As-Sunnah by al-Khallaal: 660, Chain Saheeh]

Some Precious Sayings of Imaam Ahmed

1- Hanbal bin Ishaaq said:

"I saw that Abu Abdullah (Ahmed bin Hanbal) disliked for his opinion or Fatwa to be written down"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 193, Chain Saheeh]

2- Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal rahimahullah said:

من رد حديث رسول الله صلي الله عليه وسلم فهو علي شفاهلكة

"The one who rejects the hadeeth of Allaah's Apostle (ﷺ), is at the edge of destruction"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 182, Chain Hasan; Tabaqaat al-Hanaabilah: 2/15]

3- Imaam Abu Dawood said:

"I asked Abu Abdullah Ahmed bin Hanbal: If I see that a man from Ahl us-Sunnah is with a man of Bid'ah, so should I cut off with him (i.e. sunni)?"

He replied: **"No, teach him that your companion is a Bid'ati (beware of him) then if he stops talking to that Bid'ati so be it, otherwise, join him with that person"**
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 182, 183, Chain Saheeh]

It means that after the establishment of Hujjah, the ruling of that Sunni is the same as that of the Bid'ati.

4- It is narrated in one hadeeth that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"A group of my Ummah will continue to prevail until the Day of Judgment." In explanation to this hadeeth, Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal said:

إن لم يكن هذه الطائفة المنصورة أصحاب الحديث فلا أدري من هم

"If this saved sect is not of Ashaab ul-Hadeeth (Ahl ul-Hadeeth) then I don't know who they are!"
[Ma'rifat Uloom ul-Hadeeth by al-Haakim: P. 2 H. 2, Chain Hasan; And Haafidh Ibn Hajar said: "Haakim narrated with a Saheeh chain in Uloom ul-Hadeeth from Ahmed that: If this saved sect is not of Ashaab ul-Hadeeth, then I don't know who they are" (Fath ul-Baari: 13/293 Under H. 7311)]

5- There was a bad person named "Ibn Abi Qutayla". He mentioned Ashaab ul-Hadeeth with bad words so Imaam Ahmed said:

"Zindeeq, Zindeeq, Zindeeq (i.e. He is a Heretic - thrice)". After saying this, he went home.
[Ma'rifat Uloom ul-Hadeeth: P. 4 H. 5, Chain Hasan; Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 180; Sharaf Ashaab ul-Hadeeth by al-Khateeb: 147; Aqeedat us-Salaf Ashaab ul-Hadeeth by As-Saabooni: 164; Tabaqaat al-Hanaabilah by Abi Ya'la: 1/38, 280; Dhimm al-Kalaam by al-Harwi: 241]

6- Imaam Ahmed said;

"من مات علي الإسلام والسنة مات علي الخير كله"

"The one who died on Islaam and Sunnah, died on complete Khayr (goodness)"
[Manaaqib Ahmed: P. 180, Chain Saheeh]

7- The Muhadditheen Karaam used to refer to Imaam Ahmed in Fiqh ul-Hadeeth and the understanding of hadeeth. See, Taareekh Baghdaad (4/419, Chain Saheeh)

Imaam Ahmed used to say: **"Hadeeth should not be narrated (as Hujjah) from Ahl ur-Raaye (the people of Qiyaas/opinion)"** [Kitaab al-Illal wa Ma'rifat ur-Rijaal by Ahmed: 1/272 # 1623]

8- It is said in one hadeeth that: **"The one who dies and he does not have an Imaam (Khaleefah), dies the death of Jaahiliyyah (ignorance)".** In its explanation, Imaam Ahmed said:

"تدري ما الإمام؟ الذي يجتمع المسلمون عليه، كلهم يقول: هذا إمام، فهذا معناه"

"Do you know what Imaam means (in this hadeeth)? The one on whom all the Muslims gather upon, everyone says that this is an Imaam (Khaleefah), thus this is its meaning"
[Sawalaat Ibn Haani: P. 185 # 2011; As-Sunnah by al-Khallaal: P. 81 # 10; al-Musnad min Masaail al-Imaam Ahmed, Q. 1 with reference to al-Imaamat ul-Uzma Inda Ahl us-Sunnah wal Jama'ah: P. 217]

9- Imaam Ahmed was asked about hanging the Glorious Qur'aan (as an Amulet), so he replied:

"التعليق كلها مكروه"

"Hanging the amulet of any kind is Makrooh"
[Masaail al-Imaam Ahmed wa Ishaaq, narrated by Ishaaq bin Mansoor al-Kosaj: 1/193 # 382]

10- It is narrated from Ibn Haani that Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal was asked:

"Should we pray behind the one who abuses (Ameer) Mu'aawiyah (radiallah anhu)?"

So he replied: **“We should not pray behind him; such a person has no respect”**

[Sawalaat Ibn Haani: 296; also see: P. 27 # 7]
